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June 1942

# Fourth International

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## A Year of Soviet-Nazi War:

1. A Balance Sheet of the Year . . . *by James Cadman*
2. "Socialism in One Country" . . . *Editorial Comment*
3. Stalin Blames the German Workers *by Felix Morrow*

## America's Sixty Families and the Nazis

*The Role of the U.S.-Nazi Cartel Agreements*

*by Art Preis*

The Degradation of Sidney Hook *by William F. Warde*

The I.L.P.---Words and Reality . . . *by Marc Loris*

The Crisis in U.S. Agriculture . . . *by C. Charles*

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Twenty Cents

## Manager's Column

The Fourth International Group of Capetown, South Africa, sent us the following welcome letter:

"Our Group is glad to report that at last we have received one copy each of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL and THE MILITANT . . . Please continue to send these papers. Please send also bound volumes of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL for 1940 and 1941, for which we sincerely the trial and any other literature . . . We shall send you money from time to time for literature . . . We send comradely greetings to the Party and to those comrades on trial."

J. D. of England: "Thanks for your letter dated March 11. We have received books as listed, as well as the NEW INTERNATIONAL and FOURTH INTERNATIONAL for 1939, 1940 and 1941, for which we sincerely thank you. We have not, as yet, received any current issues of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL or MILITANT. No doubt they are on their way. The material which arrived was in excellent condition.

"No words of mine can express the pleasure with which the material was received. Still less is it possible to express what the material means for the educating of our friends."

Another letter from a friend in Lancashire, England stresses the need for Marxist literature:

"A thousand thanks for your letter and parcels received today. The comrades here were delighted at your response. We hope that it will now be possible for us to receive copies of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL and THE MILITANT—two invaluable organs—regularly. We should also be pleased if you could let us have any of the past (and present) party publications in the form of pamphlets and books. We are in a very bad way for the Old Man's material—as a matter of fact we have seen only a few copies of his main works—even these have been borrowed. It may be possible to make arrangements in regard to payments for material.

"The field is very favorable to us for a good development. Sales of material are very good . . . But as I have said previously we must work very hard to educate our comrades and

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Editor FELIX MORROW

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Manager's Column Inside Front Cover

friends; only in this way will we win the battle. And to do this we need material."

In addition to the international notes received during the month, we've received many heartening letters from our friends and agents at home:

L. F. of Seattle: "Could we obtain from you a copy of 'Their Morals and Ours' by L. Trotsky?"

[This article appeared in the June 1938 issue of NEW INTERNATIONAL.] We have a contact who we feel needs to read this piece of literature."

A week or so later we received another letter from the same L. F. of Seattle: "We have received the F. I. with the article on 'Their Morals and Ours' . . . We are enclosing another 20c for another copy of the same article—we feel we need it for work here."

M. J. of Pittsburgh: "We are going to try very hard to get the literature bill down to about 0. Hope we can keep up the bigger payments regularly for a couple of months—that ought to do it."

J. W. of Los Angeles: "FOURTH INTERNATIONAL has been selling very well for the past three months. In fact, we don't have enough to meet the demand. Will you increase our bundle, beginning with the current issue, to 100 copies."

A subscriber of Reading: "I am asking you to accept this \$1.00 for copies of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL. I wish the copies, starting with the January 1942 issue to be sent to H. G. He is in a critical state. I know of no better present to send him than the magazine. He has been reading too much bourgeois trash. The FOURTH INTERNATIONAL has always been good, now it is better."

R. S. of Oregon: "I sent \$3.00 for a one-year combination sub to MILITANT and FOURTH INTERNATIONAL. You should have it by now. We sure enjoy the publications out here."

\* \* \*

The article by Albert Parker on the Negro March-on-Washington movement, which appeared in the May issue of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL has drawn many favorable comments. George S. Schuyler, most widely read Negro columnist in the country, warmly recommended the article in the Pittsburgh Courier, as follows: "Best critique of Randolph's March on Washington movement appears in the magazine FOURTH INTERNATIONAL (20 cents), published at 116 University Place, New York. The caustic comments of the author, Albert Parker, and his sound logic should provoke considerable thought in colored America about the eminent labor leader and Spingarn Medallist."

We've received many requests for copies of the magazine containing this article. And because of the publicity and warm reception this article has enjoyed, Pioneer Publishers is printing it in pamphlet form to be sold at a popular price.

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# FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME III

JUNE 1942

NUMBER 6

## Editorial Comment:

### A Year of the Soviet-Nazi War Has Settled the Debate on "Socialism in One Country" —How Stalin Made "Some Changes" in the Leninist Theory of International Revolution—His False Distinction Between the "Domestic" and "External" Problems of Assuring Socialism—The Test of the War Has Refuted Stalin's Theory

It is now a year since, on June 22, 1941 the Nazis invaded the Soviet Union. The main events in that year of titanic combats are analyzed in this issue by James Cadman. Here we should like to discuss the effect of the Nazi-Soviet war on the basic theory of Stalinism—the theory of "socialism in one country."

Great political disputes are always settled by events. Who was right is determined by what comes to pass. Often in the beginning, political disputes may appear to hinge on obscure differences, and their full significance unfolds only later. Certainly this was the case with the Stalinist-Trotskyist dispute over whether or not socialism could be built in one country alone. For years after the dispute began in 1924 many, both here and in Europe, were unable to see the fundamental character of the dispute. Trotsky's predictions of what the Stalinist line would lead to were breath-taking. Most eyes—even Marxist eyes—stared with unbelief at these words of Trotsky, written in 1928:

"The new doctrine proclaims that socialism can be built on the basis of a national state *if only there is no intervention*. From this there can and must follow (notwithstanding all pompous declarations in the draft program [of the Communist International], a collaborationist policy towards the foreign bourgeoisie with the object of averting intervention, as this will guarantee the construction of socialism, that is to say, will solve the main historical question. The task of the parties in the Comintern assumes, therefore, an auxiliary character; their mission is to protect the USSR from intervention and not to fight for the conquest of power. It is, of course, not a question of the subjective intentions but of the objective logic of political thought." (*The Third International after Lenin*, p. 61.)

Trotsky wrote that at a time when Stalin did not yet dream of proposing that the Soviet Union join the League of Nations, that the Communist parties in capitalist lands support "their" governments if allied to the USSR, that the Communist parties support imperialist powers in a war. Trotsky was denounced as a slanderer. Yet his predictions have come true.

After a year of the Nazi-Soviet war, the dispute over the theory of socialism in one country is no longer in the realm of theoretical analysis. The theory has been subjected to events and has been shattered by them. The dramatic symbol of Soviet destruction of "the eighth wonder of the world," the Dnieper Dam, epitomizes the collapse of Stalin's claim that, despite capitalist encirclement, socialism could be built

and was built within the national boundaries of the Soviet Union.

Stalin arose as the representative of a privileged bureaucracy alien to revolution. Step by step, from slander and vilification to expulsions, exile and imprisonment and then to the blood purges wiping out Lenin's generation, Stalin proceeded. "Socialism in one country" was the flimsy theory by which the Kremlin bureaucracy justified its nationalistic course and its betrayal of the world revolution.

Stalin's hirelings painstakingly dug up a handful of distorted quotations from Lenin to "prove" that the tribune of international revolution had said it was possible to build socialism in one country amid capitalist encirclement. A vain task! For indelibly printed were Stalin's own words, in one of his rare excursions into theoretical questions. In April 1924 in a lecture entitled *Foundations of Leninism*, Stalin had set down beyond recall the following words:

"But to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie and establish that of the proletariat in a single country is still not to assure the complete victory of Socialism. *The chief task, the organization of Socialist production, is still to be accomplished*. Can we succeed and secure the definitive victory of Socialism in one country without the combined efforts of the proletarians of several advanced countries? Most certainly not. The efforts of a single country are enough to overthrow the bourgeoisie; this is what the history of our revolution proves. **But for the definitive triumph of Socialism, the organization of Socialist production, the efforts of one country alone are not enough, particularly of an essentially rural country like Russia;** the efforts of the proletarians of several advanced countries are needed. So the victorious revolution in one country has for its *essential* task to develop and support the revolution in others. So it ought not to be considered as of independent value, but as an auxiliary, a *means* of hastening the victory of the proletariat in *other* countries.

"Lenin has curtly expressed this thought in saying that *the task of the victorious revolution consists in doing the 'utmost in one country for the development, support, awakening of the revolution in other countries'*." (*The Theory and Practice of Leninism*, by J. Stalin, published by the Communist Party of Great Britain, 1925. Our emphases.)

Nothing could be clearer than these words of Stalin in April 1924. They bring out two main ideas:

1. For "the organization of Socialist production, the efforts of one country alone are not enough; particularly of an essentially rural country like Russia." By socialist production, it is clear, Stalin then meant what Marx and Lenin meant: a

higher economic and cultural stage than capitalism: superior productivity per capita, superior living standards, superior education and cultural life, and, in short, a society of plenty and freedom instead of capitalist scarcity and repression. Such "socialist production" could not be achieved until the proletariat won the power in several advanced countries.

2. Hence "the essential task," "the task" of the Russian Soviets is to "develop and support the revolution in other countries." Soviet Russia is NOT an "independent value, but . . . an auxiliary, a means of hastening the victory of the proletariat in other countries."

A means is judged by the extent to which it achieves the end. The Soviet government is to be judged by the extent that it aids in securing victories of the revolution in other countries. By these words from Stalin's own mouth his regime can be judged. Far from facilitating the victory of revolution in other countries, Stalinism has been directly responsible for the defeat of the proletariat throughout the world during the last 18 years.

In abandoning Leninism, Stalin had to try to wipe out his own words. In a "second" edition of his *Foundations of Leninism*, Stalin demurely announced: "In this, the second, edition there are some changes in the third section." "Some changes" consisted of expunging the conception that "for the organization of Socialist production, the efforts of one country alone are not enough" and of putting in its place the conception that "the victorious proletariat [of one country] can and must proceed to upbuild a socialist society." (*Leninism*, by J. Stalin, International Publishers, 1928.) "Changes" meant to change the central idea into its opposite.

Challenged by Trotsky, Stalin sought in 1926 to "explain" the "changes": His original formulation, he said, had become "obviously inadequate, and therefore inaccurate." In it

"two different questions are here confounded in one. First of all there is the question: Can socialism *possibly* be established in one country alone by that country's unaided strength? This question must be answered in the affirmative. Then there is the question: Can a country where the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established, regard itself as *fully safeguarded* against foreign intervention, and the consequent restoration of the old regime, unless the revolution has been victorious in a number of other countries? This question must be answered in the negative. What is wrong with the [original] formulation is that it may be interpreted as implying that the organization of a socialist society by the unaided forces of one country is impossible—a manifest error." (*Leninism*, p. 53.)

The original formulation not only "may be interpreted" but said unambiguously that "socialist production" could not be achieved except by extension of the October revolution. Stalin's pretense that he had earlier "confounded" two separate questions was a brazen device to shift from internationalism to its opposite.

The distinction invented by Stalin was artificial and demonstrably false. The problem of achieving socialism and the problem of defending socialist countries against capitalist intervention is one and the same problem. Socialism means superior organization of production, superior productivity per capita. Were this possible to achieve within the confines of the Soviet Union alone, a country of 160 millions, its superior productivity would be sufficient not merely to defend itself against Hitler and his economic base of 180 millions (including the occupied countries) but to take the offensive and sweep all before it.

As a matter of fact, as the years passed, Stalin Byzan-

tine boasts about the victory of socialism inside the country inexorably led him to claim that this victory was also going far to solve the "external" problem of capitalist intervention. In his report to the 1934 Congress of the C.P.S.U., Stalin boasted that "The experience of our country has shown that it is quite possible to build socialism in a single country taken separately"; and as for capitalist plans for war against the USSR, "What can come of it? There can hardly be any doubt that such a war would be a very dangerous war for the bourgeoisie . . . It can hardly be doubted that a second war against the USSR will lead to complete defeat of the aggressors . . ." (*Handbook of Marxism*, 1935, pp. 923, 932.) In his May 14, 1935 address to the Red Army Academy, Stalin declared that if the plans of the opposition had prevailed, "We should have found ourselves unarmed in face of the external foe," whereas Stalin's "plan of advance led and, as you know, has already led to the victory of socialism in our country." (*Ibid*, p. 959.) The identification of the "victory of socialism in our country" with invincibility against the capitalist world became axiomatic in the Stalinist press throughout the world. Until June 22, 1941 one could never find in a Stalinist paper an admission that productivity per capita in the USSR was lower than in the capitalist world, that the standard of living was lower than in the advanced capitalist countries, or that an attack by Germany would be a mortal danger to the Soviet Union.

Perhaps the most finished form of Stalin's theory appears in his *History of the CPSU*, published here in 1939. It is worth quoting at some length:

"The restoration of the national economy [to 1913 levels] was approaching completion [in 1924]. But mere economic restoration, the mere attainment of the pre-war level, was not enough for the Soviet Union, the land of socialism in construction. The pre-war level was the level of a backward country . . . Was it possible at all to build a Socialist economic system in the USSR and, if so, could it be built in spite of the delay of the revolution in the capitalist countries? . . . Yes, replied the Party, a Socialist economic system could be and should be built in our country, for we had everything needed for the building of a Socialist economic system, for the building of a complete Socialist society . . . Neither the delay of the revolution in the West, nor the partial stabilization of capitalism in the non-Soviet countries could stop our advance to Socialism . . . Such was the Party's answer to the question—was the victory of Socialist construction possible in our country?"

"But the Party knew that the problem of the victory of Socialism in one country did not end there . . . Comrade Stalin had repeatedly pointed out that the question should be viewed from two aspects, the domestic and the international. . .

"Of course, as long as the Soviet Government pursued a correct policy, the Soviet people and their Red Army would be able to beat off a new foreign capitalist intervention. But this would not mean that the danger of new capitalist intervention would be eliminated. The defeat of the first intervention did not destroy the danger of new intervention, inasmuch as the source of the danger of intervention—the capitalist encirclement—continued to exist . . . Such was the Party's line on the question of the victory of Socialism in our country." (p. 272-5.)

Thus the "domestic" victory of socialism reduced the problem of intervention to Pickwickian proportions. "Of course" the Red Army would defeat intervention, with the danger of another intervention at a later time introduced as a pious nod to Lenin's mummy.

A year of the Soviet-Nazi war has destroyed Stalin's theory. Far from "of course" defeating intervention, the Soviet Union has sustained gigantic losses in territory, productive plant and manpower. Now the Stalinist press explains

that Germany (80 million population) plus the occupied countries (100 million) is superior in production to the Soviet Union. But why? Wasn't socialism "irrevocably victorious" by 1935, according to Stalin? And if that means anything, doesn't it mean superiority in per capita production to that of the capitalist countries? But now, for the first time, the Stalinist press, pleading with the capitalist "democracies" for material aid to the USSR, has to tell its readers that Soviet productivity is lower per capita. *The Communist* (January 1942) quotes with emphasis Anna Louise Strong's admission that even "by the end of the Second Five-Year plan in 1937 . . . Production per capita was considerably below that of Western Europe, which means that the standard of living was low." Lower productivity per capita and a lower standard of living than Western Europe—this was called the victory of socialism in one country; this, and the totalitarian dictatorship of the bureaucracy, the prison-regime in the factories, the regimentation of culture. No worse blow could have been dealt to socialism than to characterize the

strangled revolution as the victory of socialism.

Events have tragically confirmed Trotsky's refutation of Stalin's theory. But the Kremlin bureaucracy continues its false course. To the Soviet masses it offers at best only the perspective of rebuilding the shattered country under the shadow of another invasion, this time by the victorious "democracies." To the world working class it offers the role of continuing as pawns in the service of Stalin's reactionary and defeatist foreign policy. The Kremlin is indissolubly bound to the theory of socialism in one country, which expresses the bureaucracy's privileged position and its reactionary role.

But the great masses are in no way tied to that suicidal theory. Many supported it during the past 18 years because they did not understand its consequences. Now that the unbridgeable gap between Leninism and Stalinism has been exposed so irrefutably by the Nazi-Soviet war, we can be sure that a new epoch is opening up—the epoch of the Fourth International whose victory Trotsky predicted with his dying breath.

# America's Sixty Families and the Nazis

## *The Role of the U.S.-Nazi Cartel Agreements*

By ART PREIS

The Standard Oil officials "hampered the development of synthetic rubber in the United States and . . . engaged in activities helpful to the Axis nations" through their cartel agreement with the Nazi I. G. Farbenindustrie, but they are, nevertheless, "personally patriotic men," declared the Truman Senate Investigating Committee May 26 report.

Similarly, Assistant Attorney General Thurman Arnold, condemning the Standard Oil-Nazi cartel, added that "these arrangements were not entered into with any desire to aid or assist Germany."

Neither of these claims can be denied. The American monopolies are anxious, desperately so, to win the war. They are the real masters of this country; and they would never have entered this war had they not considered it essential to their interests.

At the same time, however, the system of monopoly capitalism compels the monopolies individually to engage in activities that interfere with the war objectives of American capitalism as a whole.

The consolidation of capital, which at an earlier stage of capitalism served to expand the means of production, now tends inexorably toward opposite ends. As a means of self-preservation, the monopolies must now drive in one general direction: *Curtailed and limitation of production, in the international as well as domestic sphere.*

The safeguarding and increasing of profits is the sole objective of the monopolies, of course. Monopoly profit-making requires: arbitrary limits to production, restricting the output of goods which might glut the market, the elimination of competition.

Capitalism, in its early progressive stage, created the modern national state within which the productive forces might develop unhampered by feudal restrictions. Today, however, national boundaries have become a noose strangling the productive forces. The capitalists are compelled to reach out beyond the national borders for new markets, sources of raw

materials and cheap labor, and especially for new fields for the investment of their surplus capital. Hence the war.

But the law of monopoly rules even on the international plane. The individual monopolies of every country, while instigating wars to win more of the world's markets and productive resources, at the same time seek to free themselves from competition and to restrict production through international cartel agreements with the foreign monopolies which their class as a whole aims to subdue by force of arms.

There is not a single monopoly, in any capitalist country, which does not have international cartel agreements, and which is not attempting to continue these agreements despite the war.

Thurman Arnold reported on June 3 that the Department of Justice had "discovered last week" a list of 162 agreements between I. G. Farbenindustrie, the German chemical trust, and American corporations. In his March 26 report to the Truman Committee on the Standard Oil-Nazi patents-pool conspiracy, Arnold had to admit "There is no essential difference between what Standard Oil has done in this case and what other companies did in restricting the production of magnesium, aluminum, tungsten carbide, drugs, dyestuffs and a variety of other critical materials vital for the war."

The same is true of the British, German, Japanese and French monopolies.

An outstanding example is the world aluminum cartel, an agreement by the American, British, German, French and Swiss interests to parcel among themselves the world markets. They pooled their resources, bought up all surpluses and withheld them from the world market, drastically limited world production and fixed the world prices.

The chemical and dyestuffs cartel agreement between du Pont and I. G. Farben also included the British Imperial Chemical Industries, the Etablissements Kuhlmann of France, and the Mitsui interests of Japan.

Although Standard Oil and the other monopolies now claim that their agreements with the Nazis have been "sus-

pending" for the "duration," the evidence indicates that the agreements are being maintained, so far as possible, during the war.

The American monopolists are keeping a weather eye fixed on the post-war period. They expect and desire a post-war epoch retaining all the fundamental characteristics of the pre-war capitalist era. They have no perspective other than a return to "normal" capitalist relations, to a post-war world in which German capitalism will continue to rule in Germany, and with which they will have to continue their monopoly agreements, though they hope it will be a defeated Germany—a weaker partner in the cartels.

Moreover, the American capitalists are not too sure about the outcome of the war. They are keeping the way open, in the event of a protracted stalemate or a failure to score a decisive victory, for resuming relations as equals with their German cartel partners.

As Thurman Arnold on June 3 was constrained to admit: "There is another danger from the existence of these cartels which we have yet to face. It is a danger which will be felt in their influence over the peace that is to come. That danger arises from the fact that these cartels have not been terminated, they have only been suspended during the war. The small group of American business men who are parties to these international rings are not unpatriotic, but they still think of the war as a temporary recess from business-as-usual with a strong Germany. They expect to begin the game all over again after the war."

So far as the monopoly rulers of America are concerned, even if Hitler must go, his masters, the German capitalists, must remain.

This perspective of the monopolies is shown by provisions they placed in the cartel agreements as soon as the war broke out in 1939. The American trusts hastened to implement and extend their cartel agreements with the Axis corporations.

The files of the Standard Oil Company have provided a typical example of such a "full marriage," as Arnold called it, of the U. S.-Nazi monopoly interests.

On October 12, 1939, the Standard official in charge of the negotiations with I. G. Farben wrote a letter stating:

"They [I. G. Farben] delivered to me assignments of some 2,000 foreign patents, and we did our best to work out complete plans for a *modus vivendi* arrangement for working together which would operate through the terms of the war, whether or not the U.S. came in." (Our emphasis.)

Another example is the cable which a Standard official sent on Sept. 11, 1939 from New York to the company's agent in Japan. This cable states:

"Also, as we fear United States Government in near future may have grounds for action unfavorable to American-Japanese trade, we consider timely for us to organize with Japanese partners whose influence would be valuable later towards re-establishment after interruption in our trade."

For Standard Oil, the war with the Axis is not an ideological battle to the death. It is merely an unfortunate but necessary "interruption in our trade."

According to one confidential memorandum in its files, Standard had received an offer from I. G. Farben, after September 1939, to purchase Standard's German subsidiary in order to "safeguard Standard Oil of New Jersey's interest for the duration"—i.e., to prevent its seizure as enemy property. Very likely Standard accepted the offer, since it has attempted to do as much for I. G.'s interests in American firms.

Likewise the General Electric agreement with Krupp, the German steel and munitions trust, was extended after the start of the war. A special clause was inserted into the

agreement fixing the formal date for its termination as 1950.

That cartel agreements were to be operative, as far as possible, during the war itself, is proved by the royalty provisions under which American corporations agreed to put aside a share of the profits from American war production to be paid their German cartel partners afterward.

An example of this practice was revealed at the Senate Patent Committee hearings. An official of Rohm and Haas, a du Pont subsidiary maintaining a monopoly on synthetic glass by cartel agreement with I. G. Farben, was forced to admit that his company had continued "after Pearl Harbor" to set aside royalties on U. S. military orders for post-war payment to the German interests. These, he belatedly assured the committee—after the facts were out!—are now being held "with the hope and expectation that they will be seized by the Alien Property Custodian."

## How the Cartels Curtailed U.S. Production

The American monopolies have used every conceivable device in carrying out their cartel agreements to restrict production.

*A. Restricting the Number of Producers.* The primary method is to exclude any independent companies from entering the field or to rigidly limit the number of producers and the quantities they may produce.

This was the device used by the Aluminum Company of America to restrict American production of the vital war metal, magnesium, to one-twentieth of German production. ALCOA's agreement with I. G. Farben provided that only one American company, Dow Chemical, could produce magnesium and that it could sell the metal only to companies designated by ALCOA.

General Electric, which controlled the patents on tungsten carbide, the finest and cheapest metal alloy for the use of cutting tools, informed the German Krupp steel trust, at the time of the signing of its cartel agreement, that GE desired to limit American licensees "to a small number, preferably not more than two." It was actually limited to just one, GE's own subsidiary, Carboloy, Inc. GE's agreement even gives Krupp the right to determine what companies GE may license.

Perhaps the most glaring example is tetracene, the best and most easily produced chemical agent for ammunition priming. The tetracene patents are jointly owned by Remington Arms, a du Pont subsidiary, and I. G. Farben. According to the agreement between the two, Remington could not license the United States and British governments to produce tetracene, nor could Remington or any of its private licensees produce tetracene to be used for war purposes by the American government or "in ammunition sold to the British government."

*B. Dismantling Plants.* To curtail production American partners in the monopolies went to the extreme of dismantling costly plants.

Standard's agreements with I. G. Farben covered acetylene and acetic acid, best and cheapest raw material base for rayons, plastics, paints, dyes and other important chemical products. Jasco, Inc., a holding company owned jointly by Standard and its Nazi cartel partner, had built an acetylene plant in Baton Rouge. At the behest of I. G. Farben, the plant had been closed down prior to the outbreak of war between Germany and Britain. Subsequently, Standard agreed to the complete demolition of the plant, through an agreement signed after the outbreak of war on Dec. 1, 1939. The Standard officials sought to cover up their tracks by pre-dating the

agreement back to August 31, 1939, the day before war was declared.

In another instance, work on Standard's government-financed Baton Rouge plant for the production of butadiene, basic element of synthetic butyl rubber, was impeded for several months. According to the testimony of W. S. Farish, president of Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, "in September 1941, the rubber corporation (division of the government Reconstruction Finance Corporation) instructed Standard to suspend all work on the government butadiene project for one year." It was only after Pearl Harbor, Farish claims, that the government rescinded this order.

*C. Limiting Production Through Price-Fixing.* When independent companies seek licenses to produce commodities protected by American-Nazi patent agreements, they can secure such licenses only by agreeing to sell their products at the high price established by the monopolies.

Although it was manufacturing tungsten carbide at a cost of \$6.50 a pound, General Electric, from 1928 until confronted with an anti-trust suit early this year, maintained a price as high at times as \$453 a pound, and never lower than \$200. According to the testimony before the Truman Committee of L. Gerald Firth, president of the Firth-Sterling Steel Company, a GE tungsten carbide licensee, "a large number of firms never used it because of the price."

In accordance with its agreement with I.G. Farben, du Pont has fixed prices so high as to prevent any independent production of vital dyestuffs. Speaking of this conspiracy, Thurman Arnold stated that "it not only resulted in high prices to the American consumer, but has also restricted the full development of the chemical industry which is essential to our war effort."

*D. Prohibitive Royalties.* Sometimes the monopoly simply refuses, on one pretext or another, to license any other manufacturer. More often, however, independent producers are discouraged by the exorbitant royalties demanded by the monopoly.

When Goodrich Rubber Company sought the use of Standard's butyl rubber patents, Standard brushed the request off by demanding prohibitive royalties. A letter written on Jan. 10, 1940 to Goodrich by Frank Howard, vice president of Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, states "quite frankly, it was our intention that the license would not be a suitable one under which to operate if the licensee expected to go beyond producing a relatively high-cost specialty product."

*E. Discouraging Plant Expansion.* During the past two years of government war preparation the monopolies sought to avoid expansion of productive facilities and the erection of new plants. Only when the government agreed to pay for new plants did the corporations finally agree to expansion.

A principal method for discouraging expansion has been the circulation of false reports that existing facilities and stock-piles of materials are large enough to meet any contemplated needs.

The present acute shortage of aluminum resulted from the deliberate efforts of ALCOA. For two years prior to American entry into the war ALCOA repeatedly assured the government that no new plants were needed. The Office of Production Management accepted these assurances and passed them on to the public:

"For months the Defense Advisory Commission and the OPM had said that talk about a shortage in aluminum was misleading and that it was unpatriotic to talk about the possibility of such a shortage. . . . The OPM had apparently completely relied on ALCOA as a source of information as to the availability

of aluminum and had discouraged anyone else from going into the business of producing aluminum. ALCOA had long followed a policy of maintaining high prices and building new capacity only when certain that it could sell at its fixed prices all that would be produced." (Truman Committee Report, June 1941.)

When ALCOA did finally permit the erection of new plants—at government expense—it received the lion's share of the contracts. These new plants will not reach full production until 1943 or thereafter, and will still fail to produce sufficient aluminum for the country's civilian and military needs. This is a calculated scarcity, enabling ALCOA to maintain its monopoly prices and conform to its cartel obligations.

The catastrophic rubber shortage is also due in great measure to discouragement of synthetic rubber plant expansion by the Rockefeller-du Pont-Mellon interests controlling the synthetic rubber processes. A year and a half before Pearl Harbor, Jesse Jones, head of the RFC and the government's Defense Plants Corporation, was informed of an impending rubber shortage and was urged to facilitate expansion of synthetic rubber production. Acting undoubtedly at the instigation of Standard and the other monopolies, Jones took the position that sufficient crude rubber stocks were available, even if all imports were cut off, to meet the country's needs for more than a year of war. A year later, Jones finally agreed to start an "experimental" program for producing 40,000 tons of synthetic rubber. When Singapore was about to fall, Jones informed the Truman Committee that he was making plans for the production of 400,000 tons of synthetic rubber—in 1944. He also told the Truman Committee that "the president had concurred in this (previous) course."

Likewise to prevent expansion Standard Oil falsely denied that its butyl rubber process, which it had made available to I. G. Farben, was the best and cheapest synthetic rubber available. It turned aside government investigators with the excuse that butyl rubber was "still in the experimental stage," and anyway was "too costly." Jesse Jones testified before the Truman Committee that "Standard had not encouraged any of us in the belief that butyl rubber was a success." In 1939, an official of the Navy's Bureau of Construction and Repair tried to get "first hand information on the compounding" of butyl, but was prevented, a letter sent by a Standard employe to the corporation officials boasted:

"You will recall," says the letter in part, "that I took up this question with you before his arrival. As agreed upon I took Mr. Werkethin [the Navy official] over to see the K plant when it appeared that I could not very well steer his interest away from the process. However, I am quite certain that he left with no picture of the operation. . . ." (Our emphasis.)

Four months after Pearl Harbor, and after Standard had already agreed, because of a government suit, to release its butyl patents, Farish and Howard, heads of Standard Oil of New Jersey, still sought to mislead the government as to the true value of butyl rubber. They argued that it was still in the "experimental" stage, even though the committee had before it Standard's own documentary evidence to show that butyl is superior in many respects to natural rubber. The Standard officials also claimed that butyl was "too costly" to produce, although documents taken from Standard's files showed that it cost only 6.6 cents a pound as compared to the 21 cents a pound being charged by the British and Dutch interests for crude rubber.

In addition to curtailing production, the German capitalists exacted other payments which their American partners were willing to meet.

*A. Giving the Nazis Industrial Processes.* The first important price was granting the Nazi interests the patents on exclusive and invaluable industrial processes.

To I. G. Farben, Standard Oil gave the secret of butyl rubber manufacture, its superior acetylene process and its method for producing high-octane aviation and synthetic gasoline. For the gasoline processes, the Nazis have special reason to be grateful. They have kept the Luftwaffe in the air for two and a half years and enabled Hitler to keep his gigantic motorized army in motion.

The tungsten carbide formula perfected by General Electric has helped German industry to speed up certain tooling and metal cutting processes by as much as five hundred per cent.

*B. Direct Material Aid.* The American monopolies supplied German industry with the necessary capital for expansion. American capital investment in Germany was \$5,000,000-000 in 1933. By 1939, it had increased another \$3,000,000-000.

Among the leading American corporations owning or holding large interests in German corporations are Standard Oil, General Motors, Ford Motor Co., Anaconda Copper, General Electric, International Telephone and Telegraph, U. S. Rubber, International Business Machines, International Harvester, E. I. duPont de Nemours.

Standard Oil designed and directly supervised the construction of Germany's synthetic gasoline and high-octane aviation gas plants.

When Nazi and Italian fascist airlines, prior to American entry in the war, could not secure fuel in South America, Standard's Brazilian subsidiary supplied the necessary petrol, in defiance of objections from the American State Department. The Standard officials claimed they had contracts which, as a matter of "business honor," they had to fulfill. A. A. Berle, Jr., Assistant Secretary of State testified on April 3 that: "Their (Standard officials) position was they would keep the contract they had already made, irrespective of the interests of the United States." On the same day, William La Varre, chief of the American republics office of the Department of Commerce, denied that any contracts existed, calling the claim a "subterfuge."

*C. Military Information.* Information of military value relating American and British production was regularly provided to the Nazis.

Through supplying Krupp with a complete list of the sources and amounts of royalties paid by its tungsten carbide licensees, General Electric's Carboly Company kept the Nazis informed on the number and location of plants producing tungsten carbide and the exact quantities of this vital war metal being produced in this country.

DuPont "gave a German company access to military information through Remington Arms royalty payments (on all tetracene produced in America) to the German company." (A.P. dispatch, April 17.)

Under the agreement between ALCOA and I. G. Farben, the Nazis were able to learn through royalty payments what companies in America were producing or using magnesium and how much.

After the outbreak of war between Germany and Britain, Standard Oil made an agreement with the British oil interests, pooling patents for the important hydrogenation and polymerization processes in the production of synthetic gasoline. In order to get this agreement, Standard had executed a fake dissolution of its arrangement with I. G. Farben. But as late

as March 18, 1940, as documents from Standard's files revealed, Standard was secretly passing on to I. G. Farben all the confidential data and technical information it was securing from the British and other American oil firms in the Anglo-American pool.

Most of the information about how American corporations gave military information to the Nazis is buried in the Department of Justice files. It is too explosive to make public. But here are two examples, which the New York newspaper *PM* unearthed:

"In one American company Arnold's investigators have found a patent license for making steam turbine engines, used by the Navy, with an agreement by the American company to furnish the German licensor with 'duplicates of all correspondence with the United States Navy as well as drawings worked out by the former.'

"In another case, the German trust was permitted to veto the appointment of the man in charge of military production for the American company." (*PM*, April 5.)

*D. Withholding Military Information from U. S.* An important form of indirect aid has been given the Nazis by the refusal of American corporations to give information of military value to the American government. Not a single great American corporation has willingly released its patents for war production.

Standard Oil and ALCOA, months after Pearl Harbor, forced the government to initiate anti-trust suits to secure release of the butyl rubber and magnesium patents. General Electric has been able to secure an indefinite postponement of a threatened government prosecution aimed at releasing its tungsten carbide patents.

Even where the patents have finally been released, as in the Standard and ALCOA cases, the companies have been able to retain the vital "know-how," the developed industrial techniques. Without this "know-how" which the companies have refused to release, the patents are of little value, since most of them are purposely incomplete and obscure.

American companies "failed" to give the government information about the patents they gave the German interests, or to keep the government informed of patents secured from Germany.

The following letter, sent by Standard Oil's Howard to his superior Farish, demonstrates the reluctance of the monopolies to cooperate with the government when this is against their cartel interests. In part, the letter states:

"Any program by which the Army Air Corps can obtain their objective of a one or two year start over the rest of the world in this vital matter [high grade aviation gasoline] *bristles with difficulties and sacrifices from our standpoint.* . . .

"To meet the very proper desires of the air corps as expressed to us, we shall have to *violate our agreements and perhaps forfeit the confidence of our associates, both American and foreign.* . . ." (Our emphasis.)

That letter was written in 1935. To date, Standard has not forfeited the confidence of its principal foreign associate—I. G. Farben.

## The Impotence of the Government

The findings of the Department of Justice and of two Senate investigating committees have disclosed the above outlined consequences of the American-Nazi cartel agreements.

Yet the government has proved impotent to cancel these agreements or force Standard Oil, ALCOA, du Pont, General Electric and the other monopolies to discontinue honoring the terms of these agreements.

For more than a year the facts about the American-Nazi patent-pools were in the files of the anti-trust division of the Department of Justice, but the government was reluctant to make them public through anti-trust prosecutions.

Only after the fall of Singapore and the Dutch East Indies and three months after Pearl Harbor, did the Department of Justice initiate suits against Standard Oil, ALCOA, General Electric, du Pont, and a few other monopolies to secure release of the American-Nazi patents.

But these suits collapsed under the pressure of the corporations. Standard Oil threatened to stall the suit through years of lengthy litigation. To save face, the government was compelled to give Standard a so-called consent decree on Standard's own terms. Standard agreed not to contest the case and to pay total fines of \$50,000, if the government agreed to drop all charges. Standard further agreed to formally release its butyl rubber patents, with the understanding that the government was to have no power of supervision over the company's future cartel agreements or its laboratories. The government in return obtained only the privilege of investing its funds in butyl rubber plants to be controlled by Standard. Other companies can use Standard's patents provided they agree to pay a "reasonable royalty" on all production after the war. Standard is permitted, however, to charge its butyl rubber licensees royalties during the war for providing them with the "know-how," the technical explanation which is needed to give the purposely obscure patents any value.

The only other case which has thus far come to trial is that of ALCOA. This case also was settled by a consent decree, which Thurman Arnold admitted was "even worse" than Standard's.

Before the pending government suits against General Electric, du Pont and the other monopolies could come to trial, the Roosevelt administration took steps to halt further prosecutions "for the duration." On March 20, Attorney General Biddle, Secretary of War Stimson, Secretary of the Navy Knox and Assistant Attorney General Arnold sent a joint letter to Roosevelt, informing him that "some of the pending court investigations, suits and prosecutions under the Anti-Trust statutes by the Department of Justice, if continued, will interfere with the production of war materials. . . . In those cases we believe that continuing such prosecutions will be contrary to the national interest and security." Roosevelt pointedly made this letter and his reply public on March 28, the day after Arnold exposed the facts about the Standard-I. G. Farben conspiracy to the Truman Committee. Roosevelt's reply said, "I approve the procedure outlined in your memorandum to me. . . ."

The subsequent developments in the government's projected suit against General Electric's Carbonyl, Inc., illustrate how this policy is now being carried out.

This suit was originally scheduled to begin last October. It was postponed to February 1942, again postponed to March, then postponed again to April. In the third week of April, Federal Judge Philip Forman of Trenton, N. J., was about to open the trial, when he received a telegram from Under-Secretary of War Patterson and Under-Secretary of the Navy Forrestal. The telegram asked Judge Forman to postpone the case once more, because "we desire time to study the question of whether trial at this time of U. S. vs. General Electric Co. and others would interfere with war production." Judge Forman agreed, indefinitely postponing the case.

Whether it will finally go to trial is up to the War and Navy Departments, which have an "inter-departmental" agreement with the Attorney General permitting them to halt any anti-trust prosecution which they deem an "interference with war production," unless the President orders such prosecution on the direct appeal of the Attorney General.

To cap this process, Attorney General Biddle on May 27 urged prompt passage of legislation exempting concerns from prosecution under the anti-trust laws when they are complying with specific requests from the War Production Board in furtherance of the war effort. "Already," said the Associated Press, "business men are receiving formal assurance that they will not be prosecuted for anti-trust violations directly ordered as part of the war drive. The Attorney General issues certificates under a plan worked out by President Roosevelt."

This is nothing less than unconditional surrender to the monopolies.

### Why the Government Will Not Act

To interfere in any effective fashion with the monopolies' cartel arrangements, with their control of patents and production, would mean to squeeze the very heart of monopoly capitalism. This government, whose sole function is to safeguard the interests of the capitalist class, cannot and will not take measures which would inevitably tend to undermine private property "rights" in the means of production.

In war-time particularly, the government is often constrained to establish certain rules and regulations which, if carried out, may step on the toes of this or that group of capitalists. This is done in the interests of the capitalist class as a whole.

But, as the present situation reveals, this government will not curb the cartel system and its practices because this means to impose on the basic interests of all the monopolies. Since the cartel agreements, even those with the Nazi capitalists, are an inevitable and necessary part of the capitalist process in its present stage—monopoly—the government cannot and will not prevent them, just as it will not attack the monopoly system.

The government dares not even seriously expose the cartel practices. For this might serve to discredit the capitalist ruling class in the eyes of the masses. The government seeks to preserve the prestige of the monopolists for that prestige is essential to their continued domination of the economic and political life of the nation.

If the capitalist government cannot resolve this contradiction, still less can the assorted liberals, reformist labor leaders and the Stalinists, who are anxious above all else to maintain "national unity" with the owning class.

The liberal, trade union and Social-Democratic papers have been wailing woefully at the U. S.-Nazi cartel conspiracies. The "solutions" they offer are beneath contempt.

A typical liberal newspaper, *PM*, which has published more on these conspiracies than any other daily, seriously called on the small stockholders of Standard Oil to take steps to oust the trust officials responsible for the agreements with I. G. Farben. The editors of *PM* must be aware of the absurdity of this proposal. The majority of small stockholders with a few shares of common stock, have no more say about the operations of a giant corporation than any ordinary depositor has in the operations of a bank. They cannot hope to carry through a long, costly legal fight against the tremendous wealth of the leading corporation share-holders.

The trade union leaders and Social-Democrats would

"solve" the problem by appealing to the administration to give the labor leaders a few more government posts. Naturally, they do not question the "right" of the private owners to control industry, nor do they dare to challenge the monopolies' domination of the government and its war production and procurement agencies.

As for the Stalinist leaders, their press has systematically suppressed the facts about the U. S.-Nazi cartel conspiracies. From March through May, during the height of the exposures, the *Daily Worker* and *Sunday Worker* carried exactly five tiny items, in obscure positions, on the conspiracies. This policy was "explained" in an editorial in the *Daily Worker*, April 24, assuring its readers that the "large American corp-

orations and their leading personnel" are patriotic, and that they are "part of the camp of national unity." The same editorial attacks those publications which are exposing the monopolies as "naive 'trustbusters'" whose attitude "can be dangerous" and who are imitating the "demagogy of Hitler."

Neither the monopolies nor their cartel agreements can be eliminated within the framework of the capitalist system. They are bred by the system. They will disappear only with the end of that system. The first effective step to mobilize the workers for that purpose is the transition slogan of the Socialist Workers Party:

For the expropriation of the war industries and their operation under workers' control!

# One Year of the Soviet-Nazi War

By JAMES CADMAN

Hitler will soon launch a major offensive against the Soviet Union with the objective of accomplishing what he failed to do last fall: crush the Red Army. From the Nazi point of view, this aim is of primary importance, not only because the USSR constitutes the only really formidable opposition on the European continent, but because the casualties and material losses of another winter war might, in the long run, be fatal to the German war machine.

Thus, regardless of any plans that Hitler might have in connection with the Near East, the Mediterranean or Lybia the conquest of the Soviet Union must be the first major operation on his program.

In spite of the heroic resistance of the Soviet armies and the peoples against an assault of unparalleled fury, the Red Armies undeniably suffered a long series of terrible defeats from June until late November 1941. They were defeats that no army but the Red Army could have absorbed, and indeed modern military history knows of no other instance where an army driven back steadily for six months with millions of casualties was able to stage so successful a comeback.

## Stalin's Responsibility for the Defeats

To what could these reverses be attributed? Certainly not to any inferiority of equipment on the part of the Red Army. Max Werner in his new book, "Battle for the World," offers conclusive data on that question. The Red Army's motorization rose 2.6 per cent in 1929, 3.07 in 1930, 7.4 in 1938 and 13 per cent in 1940. This growth paralleled that of the German Army during the same period. Furthermore, during 1934-39 the tank strength of the Red Army increased 191 per cent and the plane strength 130 per cent. In March 1939 an artillery salvo of a German Army Corps totalled 6,078 tons; that of a Red Army Corps—7,136 tons. Werner quotes the well-known German military organ *Artillersistische Rundschau* in 1939 as conceding that Soviet anti-aircraft ordnance was unequalled and *Die Panzertruppe* as admitting that Soviet tanks were the best in the world. At the outbreak of the war in September 1939 the Red Army was better equipped than the German Army and the Red Air Force was superior numerically to the Luftwaffe. These facts are a damning indictment of the Stalinist claim that the "breathing space" of the Hitler-Stalin pact was favorable to the Red Army. The growth of German armaments following the seizure of French, Belgian

and Czech industries was so great that by the outbreak of the Soviet-German war, the Wehrmacht had an edge of about 3 to 2.8 in material strength, a too slight edge however to give the Nazis the decisive superiority that they had in the battle of France.

Lack of fighting spirit was certainly not one of the causes of the Red Army defeats. The Nazi rantings against the Russians "who don't know when they're beaten" gave ample testimony of the morale of the Soviet troops. The German High Command had to ruefully admit in many communiques that Soviet troops continued to resist long after being encircled. Soviet morale bore up splendidly throughout the period of reverses and withdrawals.

It is on the shoulders of the Stalinist bureaucracy that the responsibility for the defeats lie. It will be recalled that only a few days before the Nazi assault, the Soviet press was vehemently denying all reports of the impending clash and asserting that Soviet-German relations were still cordial. Thus, while the Nazis were openly preparing by massing tremendous forces directly opposite the Soviet border patrols and outposts, the bureaucracy lulled the Russian people into a false sense of security. Stalin was apparently hoping to conciliate Hitler anew. In any case the last-minute denials of impending war are an outstanding example of Stalinist ineptitude, and, when followed by the statements by *Pravda* that the Red Army had been "taken by surprise," this ineptitude assumes dangerous proportions.

The idea that under conditions of modern warfare one state can make an unexpected attack on a bordering nation is utterly ludicrous, for such an attack requires a long period of intensive preparation during which forces are transported to and deployed along the prospective war zone. Reporters coming out of Germany after the outbreak of war with Russia reported seeing innumerable trains speeding toward the Russian frontiers loaded with troops and supplies, and all of Germany's famed *Autobahnen* highways congested with military traffic moving in an easterly direction months before the actual attack. In addition, for a long period prior to the Russian war, many German divisions were massed in Hungary and Rumania and airdromes and depots were constructed directly opposite Russian-occupied Bessarabia and Bukovina.

With all these signs of the imminent clash, how could the Kremlin have been, as the later alibi put it, "caught una-

wares"? It is clear that Stalin, his prestige bound up with the Hitler-Stalin pact, was ready for new concessions—but was never given the chance to offer them.

Nor does Stalin's responsibility for the defeats end here. Stalin's terrible purges of 1937 were one of the primary causes of the inability of the Red Army to compete successfully with the Germans in mechanized operations or to launch offensives on as large a scale and with the same crushing decisiveness as the tremendous German smashes in Eastern Poland and the Ukraine last summer and autumn.

The October revolution destroyed the decrepit bureaucracy of the Czarist Army and created a rising tide of fresh blood in the officers corps which had the effect of a draught of fresh air in a musty and long-sealed room. Thus it was that prior to the purges of 1937 the Red Army made spectacular advances in the field of tactical and strategic development. The Frunze artillery school gained a world-wide reputation for the excellence of its instruction. Furthermore, coordinated large-scale mechanized and aerial and parachutist operations were observed for the first time anywhere at the Moscow and Kiev maneuvers of 1935 and 1936.

Thus most of the tactics, methods and theories of war now practiced by the Red Army were actually evolved and developed prior to 1937 by such men as Tukhachevsky who, more than anyone else, furthered the mechanization and the motorization of the Red Army, developed the Soviet system of "elastic defense" and constructed the "Stalin Line," Bluecher who built up the Far Eastern Army and the Siberian defenses, Yakir, Gamarnik and others. This trend was cut short by the purges of 1937, which eliminated 75 per cent of all the officers over the rank of Colonel. Whatever staff and organizational accomplishments there have been since then are mainly the efforts of those few who survived the purge, and new officers who acquired most of their training in the Finnish War of 1939 and in the operations thus far against Germany. These Soviet military leaders have certainly not shown themselves to be as well versed in the concepts of mechanized warfare as their German foes, and this point we shall see in discussing the military developments on the Eastern Front to date.

## The First Campaign Against Russia

The German Army totaled at the start of the first campaign against Russia at least 8,000,000, of which 4,300,000 in 280 divisions were first-line troops. The Soviet Union is estimated by American military experts to have had between four and six million first-line troops in 222-333 division with 10,000,000 trained reservists, excluding large civilian defense organizations such as the Osoaviakhim.

For the campaign, Germany deployed 151 divisions, including 20 mechanized, and 10 Finnish and 20 Rumanian divisions—a total of 2,715,000 troops as well as 6,000 first-line aircraft and at least 18,000 tanks. According to later Russian figures, the USSR massed 2,790,000 troops with tanks and planes about equal in number to the Germans. A major portion of these forces were concentrated close to the German borders, a great strategical error which enabled the Germans to encircle and cut off large sections of the Red Army in Poland. This costly blunder may have resulted from Stalin's desire to hang on, for the sake of his prestige, to the territories he had occupied as the "fruit" of the Stalin-Hitler pact.

The German process of trapping and destroying portions of the Red Army was a new tactic developed by the German High Command especially for this campaign. Called the "Keil

und Kessel" (wedge and trap), it consists of a mechanized wedge followed by motorized infantry with foot troops covering the flanks of the wedge. It penetrates the Russian line and surrounds Russian troop concentrations with the aim of annihilating them. This maneuver succeeded frequently in causing the destruction of great numbers of Soviet troops and in the loss by the Soviets of much equipment. The battles at Bialostok-Minsk, the Leningrad encirclement, the Kiev encirclement, and the Smolensk encirclement in August all featured this maneuver in its most successful form.

However, it extorted a heavy toll from the Germans even in victorious encounters, as the entrapped Russians fought with great tenacity and firmness and their numerous equipment aided their defense immeasurably.

The Russians adopted methods of countering this maneuver which were first developed by Tukhachevsky. The troops entrapped in the pocket were ordered to resist indefinitely while strong Russian counter-attacks from outside were launched at the German ring in attempts to break it.

The main Soviet defense tactic, called the "Defense in Depth," was used all along the front during the October-December period and particularly in the Moscow area. It consists of a flexible front held by infantry with anti-tank and light artillery units which slow down the German spearhead, which when it has entered the Soviet lines, is attacked by mechanized units and cut off from its supporting units.

Although they won considerable victories in Poland through the use of the "Keil und Kessel," the Germans failed in their initial attempt to destroy the Red Army at one great blow and late June and early July found the Red Armies retreating at heavy loss, but in good order, on the Stalin Line.

The principal reason for the German failure was primarily the superb morale of the Soviet field troops. There were, however, two lesser factors which must also be taken into account, one of them being the high degree of fire-power of the Soviet troops which made possible a concentration of almost equal armament to that of the Germans in vital sectors. Thus, the Germans lacked the decisive edge in fire-power which had made possible for them the great break-throughs in their other campaigns. The other factor is the tremendous size of the Russian front which forced the Germans to disperse their forces on a 2,500 mile war zone and rendered difficult the deployment of forces on any given sector.

In their previous campaigns the Nazis never had to operate on a front of more than 600 miles and they could depend on their superb system of transportation to maintain a steady flow of fresh supplies and troops to the war zone. In the Russian campaign, on the other hand, they had not only a much vaster front to cope with, but their armies were operating not directly from Germany but rather from Poland and Rumania where transportation and communication systems are nothing less than chaotic. Furthermore, railroads in occupied Russia were either non-existent, destroyed by the "scorched-earth" policy, or, where seized in good condition, were of a different gauge than German railroads. However, in spite of these handicaps, the Germans did win tremendous victories so that it is the factor of Soviet morale to which must be attributed the ability of the Red Army to absorb these blows.

By the end of July, after a series of furious battles, the Stalin Line, defended by Timoshenko, was broken in the Smolensk sector. This system of fortifications, stretching one thousand miles, was first built along the specifications of the Maginot Lines but was altered to combine the rigidity of the French system with the flexibility of the German Westwall. Tuk-

hachevsky conceived it as a sponge—enemy assault columns entering the main defenses were to be caught under continual cross-fires from its numerous self-contained forts and pill-boxes called “bins.” It was broken by a combination of German shock-troop formations armed with flame-throwers and supported by artillery and planes. Its penetration precipitated the encirclement and fall of Kiev, the first drive on Moscow (checked in August), the siege of Leningrad and the capture of Odessa. The German threat to the Ukraine now began to grow really serious as the forces of Marshal Budenny (which lacked mechanized equipment) were severely battered and driven across the Dnieper River. In Leningrad the siege was so serious that Voroshilov appealed to the workers to “defend the city of the October Revolution”—the first time the bureaucracy had appealed to the revolutionary tradition.

The workers and soldiers halted the Nazis at the gates of Leningrad and Moscow. Meanwhile the rich rewards that the Nazis hoped to reap from their conquests vanished as a result of the “scorched-earth” policy and the withdrawals from the Ukraine of wheat and such industrial stocks as could be moved. The months of August and September saw German progress virtually at a standstill as the Red Army, still using its enormous stocks of equipment and supplied with plentiful manpower, hurled counter-attacks in the center and in the south. Although repulsed frequently with heavy losses, these attacks forced the Germans to constantly shift men and materials from one sector to another and to continually reorganize and reinforce their weary troops. By September heavy rains turned the Russian terrain into a virtually impassable quagmire.

These conditions, together with the snow in early October which brought operations on the main central front almost to a standstill, provided a needed respite for the Russians who needed time to replenish their battered front-line forces. The coming of snow and the failure of the Germans to destroy the main Russian armies during the previous months brought an admission from the German press that the eastern campaign would probably last through the winter. Preparations were begun in Germany to house, clothe and feed the armies through this difficult period; a stupendous task when we recall that millions of German troops were stationed on a 2,000 mile front, hundreds of miles from the homeland, and behind them were territories seething with guerrillas and unrest and turned by the winter into a sea of mud, snow and slush.

### **The October Campaign Against Moscow**

The need for a major victory to bolster German morale, as well as the need for a large base where the German Army could be adequately housed and sheltered during the winter, decided the High Command on the great effort to take Moscow in October. The major portion of the Red Armies were concentrated in the Moscow area and if they could be annihilated the conquest of all the industries and wealth of European Russia would be certain, the Nazis thought.

Fifty German divisions, supported by the major part of Germany's mechanized and aerial units and commanded by Col. General Fedor von Bock, one of the best of Hitler's military leaders, launched a major drive at Moscow in late October. By early December the campaign had come to a slow and gradual halt after one of the bitterest struggles ever recorded in military history. Although full knowledge of this campaign is still lacking, it is still possible to ascertain most of the reasons for its failure. It was launched in mid-winter with troops ill-equipped for winter warfare. The supply ser-

vices had not been reorganized to meet the strain of battle during that season, nor were the troops given sufficient time to rest and recuperate from their previous exertions (most of them came from other sectors). There were few reinforcements and little equipment immediately available to replenish losses. Very important also was the fact that the morale of the German troops was lower than ever, after six months of battle.

The picture on the Soviet side was that of a grim last-ditch defense behind formidable fortifications by the largest and best portion of the Red Army backed up by probably the last supplies and the last available first-line reserves, and backed by an armed and determined civilian population prepared to live up to its revolutionary tradition as had the workers of Leningrad. Also important to note was that the Soviet troops were not only better equipped but better dressed and trained for winter warfare; particularly was this true of the Siberian troops, drawn from the Manchukuo frontier.

The breakdown of the Moscow drive almost coincided with the Soviet counter-attack in the south and the recapture of Rostov—most unexpected, for the Soviet forces in this area had been so battered and disorganized that it was almost inconceivable that in so short a period they had been able to reorganize for a major counter-push. Yet some semblance of reorganization was carried through and counter-attacks, supported by mass civilian resistance within the city, combined to bring about a German withdrawal from this vital industrial center.

### **The Winter War**

Failure at Moscow forced the German High Command to accept the prestige-shattering alternative of discontinuing all major operations during the winter and ordering a general retirement on rear cities and positions, where they hoped to recuperate for the spring offensive. In mid-December the German armies began a major retreat all along the line to pre-determined positions; however, their plans were thwarted by a Soviet decision to launch a general counter-offensive in the hope of turning the German retreat into a rout. From December to March, the Germans were driven back in many areas beyond the points to which they had planned to retire. Furious Soviet drives retook Kalinin, and Mozhaik, strategically important cities which the Germans certainly had no intention of giving up. The Nazis suffered heavily in losses of men and material not only from the Russian attacks but from the unendurable Russian frosts and the ravages of diseases caused by the dearth of sanitation facilities. At no time, however, did their retreat acquire the semblance of a rout, for Soviet claims of large captures of prisoners, the first sure sign of military disintegration, have been notably lacking.

The winter operations were fought out along entirely different lines than those of last fall. Mechanized and aerial warfare being at a minimum due to winter conditions, most of the fighting by the Russians was done by relatively small bodies of specially trained and equipped “winter” infantry—men who attempt either flank forays on skis against lines of communication or launch frontal assaults on key points and positions. The Germans limited themselves to tenaciously holding key points which they desired as potential “jump-off” bases for a Spring drive. Interesting to note is the vital role of cavalry for pursuit, reconnaissance, and flanking operations, not only during the winter, but in mild weather as well, thus refuting any notions of its having been rendered obsolete by mechanized warfare. All these factors favored the

Red Armies during the winter campaign. But now comes the Spring.

The Germans have drained themselves, the occupied countries, and their half-hearted "Allies" of all available men and materials for the coming offensive. The recent appeals by Soviet Ambassadors Litvinov and Maisky and articles in the Soviet military press reveal Russia's present quantitative and qualitative inferiority in mechanized equipment and, since the coming military operations will be predominantly mechanized, the Red Armies face a serious crisis. However, the same factors which checked the Germans last time may combine to check them again.

One thing is certain—that if Germany fails to crush the Soviet Union this year, the Nazis will no longer have the strength to attempt it again.

### Factors in the Coming Offensive

Everyone now recognizes that the morale of the Soviet armies and peoples has been the one great outstanding feature of the war. This morale grows out of the basic economic structure of the USSR. The Soviet peoples are fighting to defend the nationalized property created by the October revolution, and which they have managed to retain in spite of Stalinism.

Furthermore, when the German armies invaded other nations they counted on the immediate support of the bourgeoisie, plus the general apathy of the confused and disillusioned civilians and troops of these countries. They knew, too, that the capitalists would never use the "scorched-earth" policy to destroy their industries and ravage strategic areas. Thus Berlin was certain that countries such as Poland, France and Czechoslovakia would richly augment Germany's industrial resources.

Reckoning that events in Russia would follow a similar pattern, the Nazis brought with them numerous Russian noblemen and priests, Ukrainian hetmen, etc. who had been hibernating in Berlin. Once the Red Army was beaten in the field, the USSR was to be divided into puppet states ruled by these Russian Gauleiters whom the disillusioned Russian masses would immediately turn to. But the invasion, far from precipitating a wave of defeatism in Russia, caused instead a rising tide of revolutionary fervor among the masses and soldiers, most notably witnessed in the sieges of Leningrad, Moscow, Rostov and Sebastopol. Likewise the masses made it possible to remove factories and stocks of materials, as well as destroy what could not be moved, thus rendering German-occupied areas useless for many months to come.

Guerrilla warfare has also played a role in hampering and disrupting German military operations, but it should not be overestimated. Trotsky and Tukhachevsky pointed out that it could be effective only when coordinated with military resistance in the field. By itself, guerrilla warfare, no matter on how large a scale, can be only a nuisance and can be coped with. The Soviet guerrilla warfare has been successful only insofar as the Germans have had to concentrate most of their forces against the Red Army itself.

The bourgeois German experts, scornful of nationalized Soviet economy, underrated its ability to produce for war. Strangely enough, it was a German military writer, Just, who in 1936 remarked that the change from peacetime to wartime production would be easier for Russia than for any other nation. The admission by Chancellor Hitler, several months ago, that the quality and quantity of Soviet war equipment had been gravely underestimated, attests to the failure of the Nazis to

realize the significance of Just's statement. In spite of the gross inefficiency of the bureaucracy in its management of the nationalized production, the fact that the economy is nationalized makes possible the over-all mobilization of all industries, large and small, for military purposes.

As to the inefficiency of the Stalinist bureaucracy, its previous record of economic and political waste and mismanagement speaks for itself and has now become an even more negative factor as the Soviet Union has to depend more and more on current production of war materials rather than on already accumulated stocks. Current production faces severe problems, aside from bureaucratic ineptitude: the degree of destruction of industrial facilities and the industrial superiority of Germany.

A glance at the following statistics from the International Yearbook of the League of Nations of 1940 shows the comparative capacity of Germany and the USSR in manufacturing war equipment (all figures in metric tons):

	<i>Germany &amp; Occupied Countries</i>	<i>Soviet Russia</i>
Iron Ore	19,818	14,600
Steel	40,404	18,000
Coal	336,014	132,188
Oil	15,872	22,219
Wool	178.5	137.4
Copper	231.9	98.
Lead	441.1	69.
Bauxite	2,068.1	230.1
Aluminum	268.5	43.8

This inferiority of Russia is further marked by the fact that the Ukraine, the greatest industrial region, is mostly in German hands. The huge industrial areas around Moscow and Leningrad have been tremendously damaged by air and artillery bombardment during recent months. Nor can Russia's industries beyond the Urals and in central Siberia be considered ample to support large-scale warfare for a long time to come, for they still account for only a minor part of the total productive capacity.

The removal of factories to the Urals must unquestionably have lagged (newspaper reports to the contrary) during the war because Russia's already inadequate railroad system, much of which is either destroyed or in German hands, has been strained to capacity to supply and maintain the armies at the front. Thus, Russia's production may have been cut as much as 30-40 per cent because of the war. Thus the Red Army will be unable to match Germany in mechanized power' in the coming operations.

But the spaces of Russia are still vast, her sources of trained manpower limitless, and her morale still unshakable, whereas the Germans have had to endure casualties in manpower which they could ill afford and their sufferings and privations have been attested to in Hitler's latest speeches.

Unfortunately, these Soviet assets are not coupled with a political policy which could appeal to the German workers and peasants in uniform. On the contrary, the USSR appears to them, thanks to Stalin's reactionary politics, as an integral unit of the "United Nations," from whom the Germans know they can expect nothing better than another Versailles if Germany is vanquished. The derogatory references in the Stalinist press to the German people as "Huns" and "Fascist dogs" can only have heightened this feeling among the German troops.

Nevertheless, their failure to conquer Russia and their heavy losses have unquestionably resulted in some lowering of morale among the German troops, and the privations which

they will have to endure in Russia in the terrible months of the offensive will certainly accelerate this trend.

The effect that revolutionary socialist agitation could have on them at such a time can be measured by its effectiveness on them in the last war. Whereas the battered German Armies on the Western front in 1918 displayed the utmost determination until the end, the victorious German Army of the Ukraine disintegrated (according to General Von Ludendorff's Memoirs) within the space of ten months as a result of Lenin and Trotsky's policies of fraternization and revolutionary agitation among the German occupying forces. Certainly the

effect of revolutionary agitation among the apathetic and half-hearted foreign contingents in Hitler's armies, the Italians, Spaniards, Hungarians and Rumanians, would be nothing less than phenomenal.

But the call for the European revolution is alien to the Kremlin bureaucracy. Bereft of this weapon, the heroic masses of the Soviet Union must make far more terrible sacrifices than need be. Nevertheless they fight on, defending the conquests of the October revolution. Despite Stalin and the bureaucracy, the fight of the Red Armies is a fight for socialism.

# From Revisionism to Social-Chauvinism

## I. The Degradation of Sidney Hook

By WILLIAM F. WARDE

This war is clarifying many things. Among them is the real character of that new school of revisionism which flourished around the fringes of the American revolutionary movement in the last decade. These gentry, who made such great pretensions of "modernizing" Marxism and making it "more revolutionary" and "scientific," have gone over in a body to the imperialist camp. As soon as the ruling class put a little pressure upon them, from fellow-travelers of the proletariat they became fellow-travelers of the imperialist bourgeoisie, shrieking warmongers and servile social-patriots.

The head of this school is Sidney Hook, and his degradation is typical of their evolution. Hook's ideas exercised great influence in the petty-bourgeois intellectual wing of the radical labor movement during the past decade. He was the best known "interpreter" of Marxism in bourgeois literary and academic circles. He had many disciples among the radicalized university youth. He made the most ambitious attempt of any American except Max Eastman to destroy from within the theoretical foundations of Marxism. Outside of Stalinism, Hook's was the most popular revisionist tendency amongst the petty-bourgeois fellow-travelers of the proletarian movement.

Today Hook has fallen on his knees before the Roosevelt regime and embraced its imperialist program. He is a far more fanatical supporter of the second imperialist war than he ever was of the struggle for the proletarian revolution. Hook's masquerade as a super-Marxist, which fooled many uncritical people, is over. Hookism now exposes its full features as an up-to-date-American model of Marxian revisionism, opportunism and betrayal.

How and why did Hook, who once aspired to be the theoretical head of American Marxism, become another vulgar petty-bourgeois democrat and fellow-traveler of the imperialist bourgeoisie? An examination of Hook's career, his ideas and methods of thought will show that this outcome is not accidental.

### Hook's Background and Education

Sidney Hook, born in 1902, grew to maturity and acquired his interest in social and philosophical questions under very different historical circumstances than his chief mentor, John Dewey. Dewey perfected his ideas under the sway of an ascending, relatively stable American and world capitalism. Hook arrived at his ideas under a debilitated capitalism, shaken

by colossal crisis and proletarian assaults. The first imperialist war and its aftermath propelled him toward the adoption of radical socialist solutions in politics and in philosophy. His way was facilitated by the fact that he was a Jew, of poor parentage, living in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn where he was exposed to the influence of revolutionary propaganda and activity.

"My historical thinking . . . began," he wrote about himself, "during the World War, when I was a student at Boys High School, Brooklyn. It was the result of my opposition to 'the war to make the world safe for democracy.' The necessity of defending on reasoned grounds an extremely unpopular position led me to wide reading in history. I was particularly impressed by the popular and historical writings of Marx and Engels and their followers."

After the war Hook studied at the College of the City of New York and Columbia University. He began his philosophical career as a disciple of Morris R. Cohen, the mathematical rationalist, and a critic of Dewey, the pragmatist. He soon became a critic of Cohen and an adherent of Dewey. His doctoral thesis: *The Metaphysics of Pragmatism* (1927) was an effort to generalize the logical foundations of Dewey's pragmatic system—instrumentalism. He has since become, in fact, Dewey's principle disciple, the interpreter of his thought, the defender of his method and the author of an official exposition of Dewey's life and ideas (*John Dewey: An Intellectual Portrait*, 1939).

In order to complete his personal development in philosophy, Hook should have progressed from Deweyism to Marxism. It appeared for a time that he might do so. His philosophical training, his historical studies in the genesis of Marx's ideas, later embodied in *From Hegel to Marx* (1936), his socialist sympathies and interests, made it possible for him to undertake the prime philosophical task of our epoch in the United States.

The nature of that task had been directly determined by two factors: the exhaustion of the theoretical work of the Progressive school headed by Dewey and the general crisis in American life.

Dewey was the philosophical chief of that tremendous mass movement of petty-bourgeois protest against the tyranny and conservative ideas of the ruling plutocracy which agitated American society from 1870 to 1929. This middle-class revolt against the ideas and institutions of the big bourgeoisie was

conducted on many fronts, beginning in economics and politics and ending in the spheres of philosophy and religion. Dewey's philosophic ideas and his pragmatic method of thought were the theoretical summation of this social and cultural movement. Dewey's *instrumentalism* was above all *instrumental* in reflecting, reshaping and making effective the aims, prejudices and habits of thought of the liberal middle-class elements at that specific stage of their development in the United States. This unmistakable organic social connection between Dewey's ideas and the sustained mass movement behind the Progressive school invests his philosophy with great historical significance and gives it an imperishable place in the development of American thought.

Bourgeois society began to decline with the decay of capitalism at the time of the first World War. The growing crisis in the capitalist world affected all shades of bourgeois thought, big and little, in the United States as well as in Europe. Reformism of the petty-bourgeois and labor varieties exhausted its progressive possibilities along with the pragmatic methods of thought and opportunist practices associated with it. Politics and philosophy demanded a revolutionary renovation which could come only from genuine Marxism.

This crisis inevitably manifested itself, although weakly at first, in American intellectual life. Dewey had advanced the general thought of the liberal petty bourgeoisie as far as it could go without negating itself. At this point American philosophy came to a fork in the road. It could escape from the impasse of pragmatism by going forward to dialectical materialism—or else it could relapse into obsolete and reactionary modes of thought, dressed in fashionable, pseudo-scientific costumes (mathematical rationalism, logical positivism). In any case American philosophy could not stick fast at Deweyism, any more than American politics could mark time at reformism, without playing into the hands of reaction.

This situation clearly indicated both the nature of the task confronting philosophy and the means for its solution. Dialectical materialism formulates the insights and achievements of modern science from the standpoint of the international revolutionary proletarian movement. To overcome the present crisis in American culture and solve the most pressing problems in intellectual and practical life, we are obliged to make the ideas and methods of dialectical materialism available and understandable to the proletarian vanguard and through them to the masses and radical intellectuals.

Just as the eminent liberal ideologists of the past period, Dewey, Beard, Parrington, *et al.*, had given expression to the class aims, characteristic ideas, special needs and general outlook of the progressive petty bourgeoisie, so must the most advanced thinkers of our generation perform the same kind of intellectual service for the rising proletariat. Our class is coming forward to challenge bourgeois (and petty-bourgeois) rule in all its aspects from economy to philosophy and is striving to supplant bourgeois domination with its own ideas and institutions. Just as the great ideologists of the first American revolution (Sam Adams, Jefferson, Tom Paine) drew upon the cultural resources and radical ideas of England and France, so the ideologists of the coming American revolution must turn to the priceless contributions of European Marxism for guidance and instruction, especially the works of the German Marxists (Marx, Engels, Luxemburg) and the Russian Marxists (Plekhanov, Lenin, Trotsky). Marxism provides the indispensable theoretical instrument for criticizing and correcting the results of previous schools of thought in the most comprehensive and fruitful fashion and for pro-

moting the progress of American thought. Only through the acquisition, assimilation and application of dialectical materialism can we expand and enrich our philosophical patrimony.

This was the juncture at which Sidney Hook arrived upon the arena of American philosophy. It is his merit that he recognized the main problem of American philosophy and tried to solve it in the only possible progressive direction through the introduction of Marxist ideas. He failed for lack of will and integrity.

## Hook's Philosophical Method

The theoreticians of European socialism had been faced with the same objective historical task after the death of Marx and Engels. They dealt with the problem along two entirely different lines, corresponding to the division between the proletarian and petty-bourgeois currents, the revolutionists and reformists, which culminated in the split of 1914.

The revolutionary continuators of Marx and Engels cast aside all outworn ideas, appropriated and assimilated the ideas and methods of dialectical materialism, and mercilessly criticized all bourgeois schools of thought from that revolutionary standpoint. They worked to replace the one-sided, semi-scientific, pseudo-scientific or reactionary ideas inherited from the past with the rounded, fully scientific, progressive conceptions of genuine Marxism. This was the method most consistently pursued by Lenin, Trotsky and Luxemburg.

The revisionists of the right-wing and centrist varieties tried to adapt Marxist ideas to petty-bourgeois conceptions, to reconcile the two opposed philosophies, to disguise a fundamental adhesion to petty-bourgeois thought and politics under a formal oath of allegiance to Marxism. This was the way of the reformists and opportunists (Kautsky, Bernstein, the Austro-Marxists, Blum, Stalin).

How did Hook proceed? After hesitating for a time between the alternatives, he took the path of the revisionists. Instead of planting himself wholly and firmly upon the basis of Marxism, he attempted to adapt Marxism to Deweyism, dialectical materialism to pragmatism, Bolshevism to Social-Democratic reformism, Marxian political economy to some fashionable form of bourgeois economics, the revolutionary proletarian standpoint to that of the radical or liberal petty bourgeoisie. In the end he abandoned all formal identification with Marxism and revealed the reactionary essence of his ideas.

Such is the *characteristic*, the *fundamental* tendency of Hook's thought and the source of its distinctive features.

Hook tried to set himself up as a totally "independent thinker" untrammelled by the orthodoxy of a Lenin or a Trotsky and standing above the special social interests and political tendencies inspiring his opponents. "I could never share the position of those who called themselves *orthodox* Marxists—people who having given up the traditional religions still believed in a church, *the Party*, and who, when challenged, fell back upon a new religion based on the inevitability of socialism," he confessed.

Real Marxists never disguised their class allegiance or the class character of their theoretical position. They unmistakably identified themselves and their ideas in all disputed questions involving the conflicting claims of petty-bourgeois and proletarian philosophies. Hook, however, adopted the classic procedure of centrists in politics, jurists in bourgeois law, and petty-bourgeois reformers in general. He disclaimed the class character of his thought, and instead of siding

sharply and clearly with the proletarian against the non-proletarian schools, he assumed the function of arbiter between them.

Like all mediators in the contest between opposing class forces, in the process of his mediation he was finally forced to come out for one side against the other. In most cases he forsook Marxist for anti-Marxist positions. In 1942 this is crystal-clear in his support of the imperialist war.

Hook always rejected the term dialectical materialism as a definition of his own philosophy. This was symptomatic of the inner spirit of his thought which shied away from unmistakable identification with Marxism. He was at best an *eclectic* materialist. Under the guise of modernizing, interpreting and improving Marxism, Hook set about to distort its cardinal teachings. He claimed to be engaged in lopping off its excrescences, its reformist encrustations, its Stalinist perversions, in cleaning up "misunderstandings." In actuality he rejected the essentials of the proletarian revolutionary outlook (the dialectical laws and materialist method, the labor theory of value, the inevitability of socialism). In the last analysis he retained only—for a time—the phrases, the trappings, the incidental ideas and episodic formulations he needed to bolster up his own zigzags in philosophical thought and in politics.

A chart of Hook's political evolution from the first World War to the second graphically demonstrates how he veered from one side to the other, from the proletarian to the petty-bourgeois camp, from a revolutionary to a reformist position in obedience to the strongest social pressures at each stage of his blind staggers. The crisis of capitalism engendered by the first World War and the Russian revolution pushed him toward communism. The temporary stabilization of American capitalism and the ebb of the proletarian revolution during the twenties led him to become Dewey's disciple and concentrate upon an academic career aloof from politics. The crisis of 1929-33 resulted in a renewal and strengthening of his ties with the Communist Party and an attempt to effect a closer approach to Marxist philosophy. During this period he wrote his most radical book: *Toward the Understanding of Karl Marx* (1932).

The degeneration of Stalinism and the German debacle drove him onto new roads. He became the theoretical inspirer of the American Workers Party and aided its fusion with the Trotskyist Communist League. Nevertheless Hook did not join the product of that fusion, the Workers Party, in 1934. He thereby demonstrated his congenital incapacity for fully merging either his ideas or his activities with the main stream of the revolutionary movement.

Subsequently, instead of moving forward, he stagnated and retrogressed. From 1935 to 1939 he became a vulgar anti-Stalinist with leanings toward the left wing of Social-Democracy. Eventually the advance of world reaction, the pressure of bourgeois public opinion and the war crisis flung this "independent thinker," like an empty bottle on a wave, amongst the Social-Democratic jingoes where we find him today.

Hook does not believe in the objective reality of contradictions. He scoffs at the dialectical law of the unity and permeation of polar opposites. He demands that Marxists provide him with examples of these laws. He need only scrutinize his own political orbit. A youth who became a revolutionary socialist as a result of the first World War has become transformed into a reactionary patriot by the second World War! Can this fact be denied? And is this not veri-

fication of the transmutation of a political personage into his opposite?

What factors operated upon Hook to produce the zigzags that led him back by a roundabout route to the capitalist camp? His course of conduct fluctuated with the ebb and flow of the class struggle. Like all petty-bourgeois individualists who imagine themselves free of social pressures, he was in reality utterly subservient to them. As they pushed him about from one position to another, he reacted to them in a semi-conscious fashion. He was not the ruler and interpreter of the historical process, but its slave and its victim.

Whenever capitalism was on the skids and proletarian power came to the fore, Hook, in common with the front rank of the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia, moved away from the bourgeois world and its ideas toward revolutionary socialism. This happened in 1918-19 and again in 1929-34. But when the revolutionary vanguard sustained defeats and the labor movement retreated, when capitalism appeared predominant, Hook fell back into the arms of the bourgeoisie. This was not a purely personal vagary on Hook's part; it was typical of the radical petty-bourgeois intellectuals during the past two decades, not only in the United States, but throughout the western world.

## The Causes of Hook's Degeneration

But every case has its own peculiarities—and it is worthwhile analyzing the specific causes of Hook's backsliding and betrayal. One constant factor in Hook's thought was his opposition to dialectical materialism—an opposition he shared with Eastman, Edmund Wilson, Burnham, and the editors of the *Partisan Review*. For all his learning and pretensions, Hook never grasped the fundamental doctrines of Marxism—indeed explicitly repudiated them. An extraordinary fact! Here was a professor of philosophy and self-professed authority on Marxism, yet he denied the basic ideas of Marxian philosophy (the scientific character of dialectical materialism; the universality and objectivity of the dialectical laws of evolution, their indissoluble connection with natural processes, the labor theory of value, etc.). He tried to palm off an alien philosophy, Deweyism, in its stead.

Prominent European revisionists had played the same trick. Under cover of modernizing Marxism, Bernstein and his school had tried to insert a Kantian foundation under Marxism. Bogdanov and others sought to substitute empirio-criticism for dialectical materialism, as Lenin demonstrated in his polemic: *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. Hook, the American revisionist, borrowed from the bourgeois intellectual world its prevailing philosophy of pragmatism and tried to graft it onto the body of Marxism.

This was not done candidly but surreptitiously. Like revisionists everywhere, Hook claimed that he was not falsifying Marxism, or trying to substitute an alien philosophy for it. He was peddling the real thing. He alone knew—and was telling the world—"what Marx really meant." When his swindle was exposed, Hook sought to throw suspicion on others. Not he but "the orthodox Marxists" were trying to palm off fakeries in the name of Marxism!

He went to absurd lengths, asserting for example that Engels in *Anti-Duehring* had falsified Marx or misunderstood him—until Hook came along to correct him. In reality Marx had not only read and approved every word of this book, but had written one section of it.

Once Hook cast off his mask, he was more outspoken. In

1934 he professed to be presenting nothing but "The Meaning of Marx." In 1940 he could say: "Whether such a synthesis is called Marxist or not, is immaterial, as is the question whether it is 'what Marx really meant.'" In 1935 he denied that he was identifying Deweyism with Marxism. In 1939 he could write: "The most outstanding figure in the world today in whom the best elements of Marx's thought are present is John Dewey. They were independently developed by him and systematically elaborated beyond anything found in Marx." Hook, who ostensibly started out by trying to adapt Deweyism to Marxism, ended by making Deweyism swallow and surpass Marxism!

Dewey's experimental empiricism is a pure petty-bourgeois philosophy—and Hook's rejection of dialectical materialism and his saturation in Deweyism constituted his initial and permanent ideological bond with petty-bourgeois schools of thought. This bond facilitated his later open conversion to reformism and social-patriotism.

Trotsky once wrote to Max Eastman concerning his revisionism: "I do not know of one case in the history of the revolutionary movement of the last 30 years where a rejection of Marxism did not ruin a revolutionist politically also. I repeat: not one case. Moreover, I know of *outstanding* cases, where people began with a rejection of dialectic materialism, especially historical materialism, and ended . . . in a reconciliation with bourgeois society." This generalization applies with full force to Hook—and all those who follow in his footsteps. Why is this? Dialectical materialism embodies and expresses the theoretical outlook, the historical experiences of the struggle for socialism. To attack it is to form a *theoretical* alliance with alien class tendencies against the revolutionary proletarian movement. If fully developed, this tendency can lead only to a thorough-going rupture with Marxism and public reconciliation with capitalism.

The primary *social* factor that made Hook so susceptible to the infection of petty-bourgeois influences was his total immersion in the academic environment. He has been for years a professor and is now head of the Department of Philosophy at New York University. He has high standing in official academic circles. He is regarded by his fellow professors as, on one hand, the outstanding American exponent of Marxism, and on the other, as Dewey's foremost disciple.

The bourgeois academicians see no contradiction in this appraisal. Neither for that matter did Hook himself for a long time. Marx, he stated in 1939, differed from Dewey, and Dewey from Marx *only* in their social and political philosophies, which were moreover different merely in "spirit and in emphasis." "Their fundamental metaphysical and logical positions are the same," he declared.

We must give Hook his due. He is indeed the ideal interpreter of Marxism for bourgeois professors, just as Norman Thomas is the ideal leader of socialism for preachers and YWCA audiences.

Hook never felt at home in the turbulent waters of the revolutionary movement. He had no intimate contacts with organized labor. He never participated in a responsible manner in party life and escaped as soon as possible when, for a brief unbalanced moment, he became a member of the American Workers Party. The atmosphere of the class struggle was alien to him.

His place was on the sidelines. He felt most at home in university lecture rooms, in magazines for intellectuals and professionals, in cafes and parlors frequented by intellectuals.

He was an American specimen of the old German *Catheder-Socialists*.

In a revolutionary party, in a trade-union meeting, in a strike, in times of difficulty, of persecution, Hook was a fish out of water. That involved personal responsibility to the organized workers, real struggle, sacrifice, devotion to an ideal. He tried for a time, like many others, to make the best of both worlds, the academic and the revolutionary. But such a compromise could not be maintained. When the squeeze came, Hook made his choice. He broke all ties, intellectual and political, with revolutionary Marxism, and took the road of academic preferment, of easy existence, of petty-bourgeois self-preservation.

Politically Hook never whole-heartedly embraced communism. He always had reservations and conditions. At his most radical he was not a Bolshevik but a left Social-Democrat. He felt closer to types like Muste and Norman Thomas than to Trotsky or Cannon. The *New Leader*, organ of the degenerate right-wing Social-Democrats, now affords ample scope for his talents.

These attachments first prevented Hook from accomplishing a thoroughgoing revision of the conceptual material and methods acquired from the more progressive petty-bourgeois theoreticians, either in his own mind or in his works. They tended to pull him back to reactionary positions in periods of intense stress like the present until they came to dominate and to transform him into a servile camp-follower of the imperialists.

We are here applying to Hook's own evolution the tests he recommended in his autobiography for others. "As a Marxist I knew that history is not to be understood in terms of thoughts and passions which move men, but in terms of the conflicting group (sic) pressures and interests which express themselves through them now in one way, now in another." Hook cannot exempt himself from the rules he not so long ago laid down for the rest of humanity, and which he himself once drew (with the requisite distortion) from Marxism.

Hook is far from being an eccentric or an isolated figure. He is in fact the most typical representative of a whole group of radical petty-bourgeois intellectuals who came to maturity during the 20's and 30's. He was the most articulate spokesman for the radical intellectuals who carried on their activities in and around New York. In his ideas and writings, his sentiments and aspirations, Hook expresses the views of these volatile fellow-travelers of the left wing of the labor movement. He is submerged in this stratum of intellectuals. He leads, instructs and influences them; their coteries in turn affect and determine his attitudes and actions.

These radical petty-bourgeois intellectuals are unstable and opportunist by nature. They shift political positions like weathercocks with each breath of change in the relations of forces between organized capital and organized labor. Let capitalism manifestly weaken itself and the workers assert their might, and these people will turn socialist overnight, become "redder than the rose." Let the relationship of forces veer in the opposite direction—and these so-called "independent" minds will change accordingly, like manikins on the end of a strong cord. They become subjected to bourgeois influence largely through the medium of petty-bourgeois public opinion, which they not only follow but to a certain degree mould in their own image.

Hook's ideological somersaults and political turnings follow this itinerary of this generation of intellectual fellow-

travelers of revolutionary socialism in the epoch between the two world wars. From an unconscious adaptation to bourgeois culture and politics, they swung over under the impact of the world crisis of 1929-33 toward the proletarian revolution. But they could not as a group make the grade. They were set back, one after another, by the subsequent world reaction. Today they have returned *en masse* to the bosom of the bourgeoisie and nourish themselves upon the dried-up udders of bourgeois democracy. This relapse into political infantilism can be discerned in the evolution of such prominent friends and disciples of Hook as Max Eastman, Edmund Wilson,

Lewis Corey, Louis Hacker and others. This "lost generation" of radical intellectuals tried in vain to reconcile petty-bourgeois ideas, politics and ways of life with the proletarian revolutionary movement; they broke with Marxism; and finally returned by diverse routes to bourgeois ideas and methods. Hook, the Social-Democrat, the social-patriot, the outright opponent of Marxism and revolutionary socialism, shows the slower members of this tendency the image of their own future.

(This is the first of a series of articles on contemporary revisionism.)

# The Crisis in American Agriculture

By C. CHARLES

The world was shocked when *The Grapes of Wrath* appeared to describe the tragedy, in the form of a novel, of a group of Oklahoma farmers wrenched from the land by the tractor and the duststorm to hunt on the roads of California for a morsel of food. But what is often overlooked is that the Joads of Oklahoma were not the only group. The term "Arkie" is less known than "Okie," but they describe victims of the same economic process; 25,660 farms disappeared in Arkansas in the decade ending 1940. Similarly 45,632 farm families, totalling about 400,000 individuals, were forced off the land in the Great Plains area of North and South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas during 1930-40, to wander in the fruit and hops regions of the Pacific Northwest. Over 124,000 farms were consolidated into larger units in the Southern states of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina and Georgia during the same period.

The disappearance of small farms with the resultant proletarianization of the former independent farmer, tenant or sharecropper is national in scope. How does it come about?

The first thing that must be remembered is that the original ideal of a nearly self-contained producing and consuming unit long ago became a Utopian chimera. With the growth of industry centered in urban regions, the city masses had to be fed by the farm.

Likewise the industrial raw materials used in industry were found primarily on the farm: wool, cotton, flax, leather, tobacco. With irresistible force the farmer became drawn into the world market. He specialized in producing those cash crops for which his land was best suited. And as he specialized in producing cash crops he cast out one by one the home industries which formerly supplied the greatest part of his needs.

The end result was no longer the "ideal" farmer independent of the "casualties and caprices of the customer." Instead the farmer sells his crops on the national and world market, and buys his bread, butter, eggs, milk, meat, fruits and vegetables from the store, let alone clothes and fuel.

## Capital Required for Farming

With the closing of the frontier, the supply of land was cut off and land rose in price. With technological development, expensive machinery became a prime necessity to the farmer. To become a farmer the necessary ambition, the strong back, the plow, the mule and axe no longer suffice. Finances are needed. This is seen in the following table:

VALUE OF AVERAGE AMERICAN FARM

Year	Land	Buildings	Equipment	Total
1890	\$2,909	(includes buildings)	\$108	\$3,017
1910	4,476	994	199	5,669
1920	8,503	1,781	557	10,841
1930	5,554	2,059	525	8,138

The new farmer is therefore generally in debt from his first days on the land. This can be seen in the growth in the size of farm indebtedness. According to the House Committee on Public Lands: "Farm mortgages grew by leaps and bounds—from a total of slightly over three and one-quarter billion dollars in 1910 to nine and one-quarter billion dollars in 1930." In 1940, this figure was \$6,909,794,000, reduced mainly through foreclosure and other types of financial delinquency. Over 40 per cent of the farms in the country are mortgaged, with mortgages accounting for about 45 per cent of the total value of the farms.

Generally the later an area was opened for settlement the higher is the proportion of large-scale farms to small farms. Oklahoma and Texas were opened late in the history of the country; in both large-scale farming dominates. California's Imperial Valley was opened in the first years of the present century and it is now a center of factory production on the land. The area called the Bootheel of Missouri was within ten years under the sway of large-scale and corporation farming. In the newly opened areas of Arizona, entire counties are under the control of a handful of growers.

To be able to start farming today requires on the average \$8,000. The fledgling farmer has to borrow to go into farming. His tenuous hold on the farm is usually terminated by an economic crisis when his farm is foreclosed and the land taken by some large operator. In the newly opened regions the stage of independent family-sized farms was telescoped into a very brief period or skipped entirely.

Interest on loans is an important item in the farmer's budget. The figures are given in the table below:

Year	Total		% of Income
	Net Cash Income	Interest Payments	
1925	\$5,062,000,000	\$723,000,000	10
1930	3,233,000,000	654,000,000	20
1935	3,869,000,000	413,000,000	10

Thus a substantial part of the farmer's income goes to finance capital as interest.

A huge increase in farm indebtedness took place during the first World War, which was based on the high prices of farm produce. If a loan of \$1,000 was taken by a farmer

at the rate of 8 per cent per year when wheat was selling at \$1 a bushel, 80 bushels paid the yearly interest. If prices sank to one-third of the former amount, 240 bushels of wheat would be needed to pay the interest. With the end of the war and with the decline in prices which became catastrophic during the economic depression that began in 1929, it became impossible to meet the interest and principal charges. Foreclosures spread throughout the farm areas. Banks became important landowners.

## Rise and Decline of Tenancy

The process that increased farm indebtedness also resulted in the rapid development of farm tenancy, sharecropping and absentee landlordship. If a farmer could no longer begin as the owner of a farm, he hoped to be able to climb to independence starting as a tenant or sharecropper. We find therefore that sharecropping and tenancy, which in 1880 totalled 25 per cent of all farms, had by 1935 increased to 42 per cent of all farms. Each year between 1927 and 1937, according to the President's Committee on Farm Problems, the number of new tenants totalled 40,000 as independent farmers were forced to take up farming, not in their former status, but as tenants.

Rents paid by farmers for the use of the land, which in 1910 was \$561,000,000, in 1937 reached \$829,000,000. Approximately 30 per cent of the farmer's cash income was spent in that year in rent and interest.

In the Southern states, the sharecropping system has its roots in the old plantation. Emancipation proclaimed political and civic freedom for the former slaves but left the land, the basis of the power of the Southern ruling class, in the hands of the former owners. The Negro, having no land, was forced to go back to work on the old plantation, in the form of working on shares.

In Texas, a sparsely settled territory, the sharecropper system assured a constantly available labor supply. Thus Texas, while still in its pioneer stage, counted 37.6 per cent of its farmers as tenant-operated. In 1910 this figure had increased to 52.6 per cent and by 1930 to 60 per cent.

The introduction of machinery is now changing the entire pattern of agriculture.\* Mechanization makes it more profitable to consolidate delinquent farms into larger holdings, to drive croppers and tenants off the land.

The industrial revolution arrived on the farm late, but it has come with a fury that compensates for its tardiness. In industry the basis of the industrial revolution was water and steam power, neither of which was applicable to the farm, where the development of machinery long was limited to those operated by animal motive power. But the internal gasoline combustion engine wrought a transformation. Based on the truck and tractor, industrialization on the land has spurted forward. Those who cannot buy machinery fall in the competitive fight and their land is taken up by those who can secure the modern methods of production.

In the words of the *Yearbook of Agriculture*, "mechanization fits in with large scale operations. It involves larger outlays of capital. It makes farm ownership more difficult

for the farmer of limited means. It crowds tenants and sharecroppers off plantations."

In 1920 there were less than a quarter of a million tractors on American farms. Ten years later the number increased to 920,021 and by 1940 the figure was 1,567,430.

In Oklahoma the number of tractors was nearly 60,000 in 1940. The introduction of the tractor has been an irresistible force for the consolidation of operating units. Where formerly four families of various tenures worked, two or even one remains. Nearly 5,000 farm families numbering about 25,000 persons "disappeared" in the state each year between 1935 and 1940.

In Texas the last props are being knocked from under the tenant and cropper system, primarily as a result of the introduction of machinery. One writer estimates that between three and five sharecroppers are displaced by each tractor. Since 1935 about 10,000 families have been displaced each year. The number of sharecroppers decreased in the year 1935 by 28,654, and during that year the number of farm laborers increased by 25,601.

In those regions where the sharecropper retains some, although a weakening, hold it is due only to the miserable conditions of the tenants and croppers which make it cheaper to use tenants than to introduce machinery. This is true of the Piedmont region of the South, but in Texas and Oklahoma the topographical conditions make it possible to secure, by the use of tractors and wage labor, greater profits. This is of course the decisive test: the amount of profits.

The driving of huge numbers of tenants and independent farmers from the land results in a progressive worsening of the conditions and terms of the remaining tenants and croppers, as competition by the dispossessed farmers for the available lands permits the landlords to increase rents. Landlords are now charging a cash rental for pasture land as well as for the shack which formerly had been supplied free. In Texas croppers find it increasingly difficult to get land on the basis of "halves." The term is itself descriptive. In the years before the first World War the almost universal system allotted only one-fourth of the cotton and one-third of the other crops to the landlord.

## Other Effects of Mechanization

In the wheat fields of Kansas and surrounding areas the dividing line between machine methods and hand labor is the year 1926, when the combine harvester was developed. Prior to that year, each harvest required 200,000 workers to reap the grain. In its first year, the combine harvester displaced 33,000 workers and by 1933 had eliminated 150,000 workers.

The abolition of the jobs of the workers was merely the prelude to the disappearance of the small farmer as the capitalists were quick to see the possibilities for profits in large factories producing wheat. Many independent farmers followed the harvest hands into oblivion.

Each mechanical corn picker displaces from five to six human corn pickers. Over 65,000 mechanical corn pickers are now in use in the Corn Belt of the Middle West. The result is fewer and larger farms.

There are other, indirect, effects of mechanization upon the independent farmer that weaken his economic position. With the displacement of farm draft animals the need for commercial fertilizer is intensified; with the need for evermore modern machinery to keep from going under in competitive struggle the requirements for credit to buy machinery

\*Among other factors promoting the introduction of machinery is the one cited by the *Implement Record* of February 1938: "... the fact that certain agricultural crops are extremely vulnerable to the strike encourages the farmer to be interested in dependable methods over which he has control. He has found the machine a faithful and dependable ally."

grow greater; with the need for credit, machinery and fuel grows the need for cash crops to purchase these items, and thus is made all the more impossible farming as a "way of life." As the farmer sinks deeper into the vortex of industrialism and commercialization the stranglehold of finance capital becomes ever tighter.

The firms selling equipment, fuel, providing credit, etc. are monopolistic. Two farm machinery concerns stand in marked contrast to more than six million farmers. The monopoly manipulates the price of the commodity it sells with relatively great effectiveness; the prices of the farm products are set by the market gerrymandered to benefit the monopoly. Between the years 1929 and 1933 the prices of agricultural commodities declined 63 per cent, but the price of farm equipment was reduced only by 6 per cent.

In the decade between 1927 and 1936 International Harvester made an average profit of 10.61 per cent each year and Deere Company made 11.91 per cent. These two companies control farm equipment production to all intents and purposes. Farm machinery in its direct cost, depreciation and operation expenses amounts to 21 per cent of the cash income of the farmer in 1939 as compared with less than seven per cent in 1913.

The tobacco companies in the 21 years ending 1937 averaged an annual return of 16.44 per cent. The National Dairy Company made 20 per cent each year from 1927 to 1932. In its poorest year it netted 6.4 per cent, 1936—12.7; 1937—9.6; 1938—10.2; 1939—11.6. Borden took in profits of 14.2 per cent in 1929; its low was 3.4 per cent in 1934 and it earned in 1936—7.9 per cent; 1937—6.3; 1938—6.6; 1939—8.2.

The TNEC monograph, "Competition and Monopoly in American Industry," states:

"Agriculture is notoriously unprofitable. It is estimated that farming yielded a gross income, including revenue from the sale of farm products, the value of products consumed on farms and rental value of farm homes, of \$21,288,000,000 in the year ending June 30, 1927; the subtraction of rent, wages, interest, and other payments, left a net income of \$3,452,000,000; but interest on the farmer's investment, computed at 4.5 per cent, plus wages for the farmer's labor, figured at \$540 a year, amounted to \$5,169,000,000; the industry therefore incurred a net deficit of \$1,717,000,000 in that year."

This was in the "prosperous" year of 1927, and yet the farmers after paying themselves wages of less than \$10.50 a week still showed a net deficit. The farm equipment trust, the huge tobacco companies, the milk trust, the milling companies, the railroads, the packing houses, all showed substantial profits . . . monopoly prices at the expense of the dirt farmer.

The inferior economic position of the small farmer in relation to the trusts that sell to him or buy his products is manifested in other phases of farm life. The large canning, sugar, ginning and shipping concerns buy the products of the independent farmers (besides often producing the agricultural products themselves). The buyers are few and easily come to an understanding with one another, while the farmers are many and atomized. The disadvantageous position of the independent farmer in relation to the large combinations of capital is manifested in the reduction of the small farmer to only nominal independence. The large company which buys the product, and fixes the price of it by contract at the beginning of the season often sets the wage rate for any wage labor hired by the farmer, establishes the time of planting and the method of cultivation. It instructs the farmer as to

the kind and quality of crop to be planted and chooses the time and manner of picking the crop.

In these ways the large processing and shipping concerns secure a deathhold on farming. If besides securing their raw material from the independent farmers, the large capitalists also own their own farms, they can take a "loss" on the farming end of their operations and thus drive down the price of the produce bought from the farmers. They then can make up their "loss" on the processing end, while the farmer is left without recourse. Thus the ground is prepared for the further proletarianization and pauperization of the independent farmer. The farmer is driven lower and lower in his living standards as ever greater portions of his income go to monopolistic and large scale enterprises. Finally even the great sacrifices in living standards do not avail and he is foreclosed.

## The Role of Agricultural Exports

The developments taking place in agriculture can only be understood on the background of the decline in exports of agricultural products. In 1919 farmers received \$4 billions from exports. By 1936 this had decreased to \$709,000,000 and even this figure was lowered in 1939, when exports were \$655,000,000.

Among the reasons for this decline are:

The growth in foreign sources of agricultural products, as in Canada, Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, India, Egypt, Brazil and other countries, which have better land, and often use the most modern methods of production.

The lowering of the food-buying power of the masses through the world by the slashing of their standards of living. As a corollary to this, we have the shift of exports and imports from food and agricultural products to war goods.

The third reason was the raising of tariff walls against foreign agricultural products in many countries, so as to protect the home producers of these items from American competition. This meant a lowered standard of living for the masses and the uneconomical use of the world's agricultural resources.

Another cause is the fact that in order to pay the debt that is owed to Wall Street from abroad, we have had to annually import goods or forfeit the interest on this debt. The powerful industrialists, connected with finance capital, want to import farm products rather than industrial goods. Upon the basis of the fact that the United States is an imperialist nation, that has exported over \$15 billions worth of capital, Louis Hacker stated in his book, "The Farmer is Doomed," written in 1933:

"We are now in that blessed state of being a creditor nation. The rest of the world must every year produce at least \$1,000 million of goods and service over and above local needs to pay us our pound of flesh in interest charges. It must be axiomatic that our debtors neither will be able to pay nor, what is more important, be in a position to borrow further unless they are permitted to produce those commodities they are capable of most easily. . . . To keep South America and China open for American capital . . . the world—and that includes the United States—must be permitted to buy Manchurian (and eventually Mongolian) wheat and soy beans, Uruguayan and Brazilian jerked beef, Argentinian wheat, corn, mutton and chilled beef. . . ."

If we add to this list Brazilian, Indian and Egyptian cotton, and Near East tobacco as well as other items, we can see how the world market—and even the home market—for American agriculture is receiving strong blows in vital products.

The present war boom in agricultural prices will not result in the continued sky-rocketing increase in prices that took place in the first World War. During that period the United States could sell to most of the world, outside of the actual limited war front, and the enemy powers. Now all the Far East and all the continent of Europe cannot buy American products as the theater of war extends. The clamoring markets available for American agricultural products in the last war are seriously reduced in this. In all probability there will be no boom in agriculture during the second World War such as took place in 1914-19.

### The Role of New Deal "Reform"

The AAA program, ostensibly for the relief of the farmer, has acted to increase the tempo of centralization and accumulation of farm lands in ever fewer hands, as a strong incentive was given to landlords to evict sharecroppers and tenants and thereby secure the entire government payment which otherwise would have to be shared with those living on the land. Particularly acute in the cotton areas, this practice can be found elsewhere. The following report was given to the Tolan Committee, concerning a county in Kansas:

"This county in the past seven years has rapidly ceased to be in the small farmer class. Farm after farm has had the improvements torn down and the acreage cultivated by the hired man. This procedure has reduced the landlord's taxes and at the same time he has received the entire AAA or soil conservation allotment..."

Among the "farmers" receiving AAA payments was the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, which got over a quarter of a million dollars in 1939. In California 2 per cent of the farms received 43.6 per cent of all the payments, while nationally 32 per cent of the payments went into the pockets of 5 per cent of those receiving payment.

The decline of the independent farmer drags down with him the country town professional and merchant, whose existence was based on the independent farmer as client and customer. Veritable ghost towns can be found in sections struck by the forces operating in agriculture.

What of the future of the small farmer? The economic

forces now at work will continue. Some farmers will sink into subsistence farming on submarginal lands, and thereby struggle to eke out a meager animal existence surrounded by the traditional ignorance of the peasant. (Even now from one-third to one-half of the farmers contribute but a negligible proportion of the marketed farm products. They are subsistence farmers.) This, or proletarianization, is the best capitalism can offer.

The process of mechanization on the farm is far from completed. The development in farm machinery has been mainly in the preparation of the soil and sowing; outside of the combine harvester in wheat and the mechanical picker in corn, harvesting machinery has not developed as rapidly as machinery used in the spring of the year.

Cotton culture is on the eve of the greatest technological revolution since the invention of the cotton gin. If the introduction of the tractor and gang plow had the consequences in cotton that we have described, the effect of the mechanical cotton picker will be cataclysmic as hundreds of thousands of cotton pickers will be thrown out of work, the entire sharecropping and tenant system abolished and the independent farmers will lose their land. The mechanical cotton picker is receiving the last touches before being released to the market, according to reports.

Machines in other crops have been or are being perfected: In sugar beets, there are planters, toppers and lifters; a hop picker is in use in many places; a vacuum cleaner apparatus harvests clover seed in 12-foot swathes; a tractor-driven walnut picker is being developed. In May 1937, a mechanical asparagus cutter was exhibited.

Under capitalism these machines can mean only misery for the independent farmer and agricultural worker.

According to the fable, wherever Attila's horse stamped there grass never again grew. The reputed exploits of this flesh and blood equine become prosaic when compared with the power of the iron horse. People decay and disappear where its hoof print digs into the soil!

*(This is the second of three articles on the present state of American agriculture. The first appeared in the May 1942 issue.)*

# The I.L.P.--Words and Reality

By MARC LORIS

The English bourgeoisie must now defend itself on several fronts: against German and Japanese imperialism, against American imperialism, against the colonial peoples of the Empire, and finally, against the English proletariat. Whatever the outcome of the war, British imperialism can only continue to decline. Its problem is not to gain something from the war, but to lose as little as possible. Inevitably the disintegration of the Empire leads to a revolutionary crisis in England.

The discontent of the masses of Britain is growing. The workers, the women and adolescents are chained to exhausting labor for wages which are lessened every day by the rising cost of living. The soldiers receive absurdly low pay. The capitalists are amassing greater profits than on the eve of the war. The Black Market rages. The leaders of the Labour Party and the Stalinists are intoxicated with chauvinism. But in the depths of the masses the war and its miseries are ripening a revolt against the regime.

Under these conditions, the Independent Labour Party last November began "A Socialist Britain Now" campaign. The program of this campaign, remodeled several times, now has five points: (1) Social Equality, (2) Social Ownership, (3) Liberate the Empire, (4) Help Soviet Russia, (5) Socialist Peace Offensive. These five points are not unattractive, especially compared to the betrayals of the Labourite and Stalinist leaders. However, the best program is worth only the worth of the party which is trying to achieve it. That is why we must engage in a close examination of the present policy of the ILP.

When we read the ILP press and the speeches of its leaders, we soon see that they are permitting a great number of variations on the five points of the program. Thus the first two points are often replaced by the formula "end injustice," which is merely an empty phrase of pre-Marxist socialism. The third point, on the liberation of the Empire,

is sometimes used in a revolutionary sense, but it is also sometimes transformed into the reformist formula "Democracy in the Empire" (*New Leader*, February 14, 1942). Finally, the party permits equivocal expressions on the war itself. Thus, Brockway contrasts the ILP's program to "the purely military method" and presents it as "a political contribution to the end of the war" (*New Leader*, April 18, 1942). The irreducible opposition of two *aims*, that of the bourgeoisie and that of the proletariat, is obliterated and becomes a choice between two *methods* for a common aim, the end of the war. The same defect is present in the speech of Campbell Stephen, representing the ILP in Parliament, on April 15th. Here is his conclusion:

"If in framing his budget the Chancellor had shown vision and imagination and had sought to bring the economy of this country in line with the economy of Soviet Russia, he would have given hope to the working people who have been called to make all the sacrifices, as well as to the workers in the various parts of the Empire. He would have struck a tremendous blow at the tyranny of Hitlerism in Germany."

What confusion! Stephen asks from the Chancellor "vision and imagination" in the conduct of the war. It is an appeal to the reason of the exploiters, not a call to revolt of the oppressed.

All the ILP's propaganda is permeated with an incurable confusion which manifests itself in all questions, large and small. Each page of their paper contains several examples. We take another one at random. On March 7th the *New Leader* published an article on Sir Stafford Cripps in the form of an open letter. This letter to the colleague of Churchill begins "Dear Comrade" and ends "Fraternally yours." Without irony! As for the contents of the article, one sentence suffices: "You delivered a trenchant speech [in 1935] on which I beg you to reflect."

The fundamental fault of the ILP's propaganda is that one finds everything in it: from the revolt of the colonies to "dear comrade" Cripps. In this jumble the opportunistic declarations dominate, the revolutionary formulas lose all real content and are transformed into empty *phrases*. In all its propaganda and activity, the ILP is incapable of distinguishing between *reform* and *revolution*.

## How Achieve "A Socialist Britain Now"?

The ILP leaders insist that their program should be achieved in the very near future. On all occasions they underline the word "Now." Ridley writes on February 21st: "The time for a Socialist Britain *now* and the accession to power of a revolutionary party may be nearer than even the most optimistic imagine." On April 11th the *New Leader* even gives a precise date in writing: "Socialist victory in 1942 is the correct slogan." The real meaning behind these quixotic phrases can be seen from the rest of the same statement of Ridley: he speaks of the "accession to power of a revolutionary party" without daring to name the party, knowing too well how far the words are from reality.

The ILP is still a small party. Naturally, no one would blame it for that. But every worker attracted by the slogan "A Socialist Britain Now" and by the promises of the ILP has the right to ask the question: How fulfill such a program in such a short time? Unfortunately the ILP leaders, eloquent in praising socialism as against capitalism, have no breath left with which to enunciate concrete ways of reaching the aim.

When its campaign was opened last November, the in-

augural appeal of the party defined the campaign thus: "The object of the campaign will be the mobilization of all the elements in Britain which are in favor of the creation of a Socialist Government." In order to accomplish this "mobilization" the party announced: "Regional conferences will be held throughout the country, to which delegates from all sections of the Labour movement and left organizations will be invited." Four or five of these conferences took place in different towns last March, the most important in London at which a resolution was presented by Brockway, according to which "there was a growing realization that the present system was doomed and that a better one must be born. The change would have to come from below and the Socialist Britain Campaign gave a lead in the organization of the workers for the task." Will Morris, who seconded, "said it was clear that the Labour Party had lost faith in Socialism as a practicable possibility, and the broad movement aimed at by the campaign had become an absolute necessity." These few sentences suffice to recall to us other "movements" and "mobilizations" of the same type: the "congresses" and the "fronts" of the Comintern several years ago. The analogy can be pursued on the organizational plane. At these conferences "delegates from all working-class, Socialist and kindred organizations are invited." At the London conference, the most successful, 154 "delegates" "represented" 80 organizations: unions, cooperatives, various clubs, and ILP branches. But the public demonstration which followed gathered 800 people, that is, an average of ten persons per organization. As for the character of the "representation" and of the "delegates," a small note in the *New Leader* informs us: that "speakers who are cited as members of Trade Unions, the Co-operative Party, the Labour Party, and National Council of Labour Colleges, are participating in the campaign, of course, in their individual capacity, and *not as representatives*." We have here the return of the ill-famed Stalinist masquerades.

Since March, the ILP apparently has abandoned the "conference" method. What then are the ILP's other methods for attaining "a Socialist Britain now"? After having read and reread the ILP press, the question remains without an answer. Certainly, there is no lack of grand phrases: "Our task is to carry on the struggle against the Vansittarts and the other enemies of Socialism in Britain, to press on with the building of a Movement here which will be capable of making Britain socialist." Writing "Movement" with a capital letter does not, however, bring us an inch nearer the solution of the problem. "We must inspire the people." "We launch our Spring offensive, an offensive which will not die with the Spring, but gather momentum as it rolls forward to the new dawn of international Socialism." Strange as it seems, these are the least vague phrases we find on the question of how to realize a Socialist Britain now. And don't forget that "Socialist victory in 1942 is the correct slogan"!

This confusion in methods only reflects the uncertainty of the goal to be attained. At the initiative of the rank and file and against the opposition of the leadership, the recent ILP national conference undertook to examine the character of "Socialist Britain." "Conference carried by a large majority an amendment which declared that Socialists 'should co-operate in the creation of a Socialist Britain in which the working class will achieve power through its own organizations, industrial unions and workers' councils which will organize at one and the same time the economic and political might of the working class.' This was designed to expand a statement in

the original resolution that Socialists should 'combine in an effort for the establishment of a Socialist government.' It is clear: the leadership proposed an extremely vague resolution and the rank and file members felt the necessity of giving it indispensable preciseness. Then what happened? Two members of the leadership "strongly opposed the amendment on the ground that it put undue importance on industrial organization and, by implication, played down the importance of Parliamentary work." This opposition shows how far these "leaders" are from revolutionary methods: "the importance of Parliamentary work" is opposed to the soviet form of socialist power! But listen to the end: "James Maxton wound up the debate on behalf of the National Committee and declared that the point at issue was not important." "Socialist Victory in 1942 is the correct slogan," but a fundamental problem of the revolution is deemed by the leadership to be "not important"! Underneath their grand radical phrases the ILP leaders have no serious perspective of revolution.

## Two Enlightening Episodes

Richard Acland is a liberal who "in middle age has come forward as an apostle of Socialism" and has undertaken to preach it in a "more genteel way." This is what the *New Leader* announces to us under the heading "Richard Acland Marches On." The editors go so far in their admiration that they give him nearly an entire page of their paper to present his views to the workers. We note in passing that the *New Leader* complains bitterly of the lack of paper because of rationing. And here are the revelations of Sir Richard Acland:

"Now I do not believe a people, particularly the British people, would ever make a revolution except in a mood of desperation. . . . They might be driven to such a mood by adversity in war; but in such circumstances, I cannot see how the revolution could be other than Hitler's opportunity. And Britain is too small to afford a 'Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.' Therefore, apart from my sincere belief that a revolution would set in motion many forces which would lead to undesirable ends, apart from my perhaps purely bourgeois dislike of revolutions as such, I do not believe a revolution is a practicable possibility. If this is correct we have to think in terms of majorities in the House of Commons."

And Sir Richard concludes his article by calling for complete support of the war.

Fenner Brockway answered Acland. The first part of his reply was a eulogy of Sir Richard's discoveries. He begins:

"I welcome the article by Richard Acland. He is doing a service for Socialism which we must not underestimate." And he continues: "The socialist movement needs an intensification of its moral fervour. . . . Richard Acland has brought a simple freshness . . . the inspiration of a moral crusade."

In the second part of the article Brockway undertakes to point out to Sir Richard that Parliament cannot be converted to socialism. However, he concludes: "We have no doubt on which side Richard Acland will be when the crisis comes" and he ends by speaking of "our common hope."

A liberal feels the need of expressing his dislike of revolution, of treating revolutionists as agents of the enemy, of slandering the Russian revolution. All that is most normal. But why open to him the columns of the organ of a party which calls itself revolutionary? Why welcome his "contributions" and his "services" to socialism? What does this nonsense teach the workers? The elementary duty of an honest revolutionist is to teach workingmen to have contempt for such a gentleman. After the *New Leader's* indecent acclaim of Acland, won't a worker have the right to say to himself:

I am sure that Acland will never be in the camp of the revolution. He says so himself: Now, Brockway announces that they will both find themselves in the same camp "when the crisis comes." Brockway "has no doubt" about that. Would I be wrong in concluding that Brockway will not be in the camp of the revolution?

At the national conference of the party in April a resolution was presented for free education from nursery schools to universities and for other democratic demands in that field. The conference included in the resolution an amendment demanding that education should be secular.

Whereupon James Maxton took the floor and declared that the amendment "made the resolution thoroughly impracticable and that an attempt on the part of the Government to satisfy the demand would arouse the bitterest controversy; the Government, therefore, would not even consider the proposals." Who is speaking? Mr. Churchill or the leader of a party which wants a "Socialist Britain now"? For Maxton the thing that counts is the present parliamentary mechanism and he must carefully restrict his demands to that which it can give. After Maxton's intervention, the conference voted down the resolution together with the amendment. Then what to think of the program "a Socialist Britain now"? According to Maxton's criteria it is highly "impracticable," for, no doubt, it "would arouse the bitterest controversy"! Marceau Pivert recently called the ILP the "Social-revolutionary vanguard not only of the British working class, but of all the other countries" (*Analysis*, February-March 1942). How does this free-thinker (is he still a Free Mason?) explain the refusal of the ILP leadership to fight for secular education because "the government would not even consider the proposals"?

## The Problem of the Labour Party

The Labourite leaders cynically collaborate with the Tories in order to bring the imperialist war to a successful conclusion. The English workers feel more and more ill at ease, but are still organized in the Labour Party. How get out of this impasse? How take a step forward?

To this fundamental question, point of departure of all the problems of the English revolution, the leaders of the ILP bring no answer. By this they betray the purely abstract character of their propaganda. How would a Leninist leadership approach this task? It would address itself to the members of the Labour Party saying: "End the political truce! Break with the representatives of Capitalism! Labour to power! Here is the program we propose for a Labour government." And the revolutionary leadership would present a series of fundamental demands.

That is the policy which our English comrades propose. The leaders of the ILP lost no time attacking them. In the February 21st *New Leader*, F. A. Ridley writes:

"In fact, everything indicates that this war will mark the end of the Labour Party just as the last one did that of its liberal predecessor, despite the vallant efforts of the Trotskyists to revive the fast putrefying corpse. The spirit died in it long ago. After all, even Christ gave up the dead as hopeless after three days!"

What supercilious conceit! And at the same time, what lack of comprehension of revolutionary tasks!

What does Ridley mean when he characterizes the Labour Party as a "fast putrefying corpse"? Does he mean that the workers are rapidly abandoning this party, to come, for example, to the ILP? Unfortunately, this is not so. Ridley him-

self recognizes this fact; in the April 4th *New Leader* he writes: "The British masses are only in the earliest stages of mental emancipation from the mists of reformist illusions." Only in the earliest stages of *mental* emancipation, not even yet of *organizational* emancipation! Then what is meant by the "fast putrefying corpse"?

In the same article Ridley explains that "the official Labour and Trade Union Movement must surely be a proletarian 'Bourbon'" for it can learn nothing from experience. And he concludes:

"In view of this, we notice with astonishment that the ('Trotskyist') 'Socialist Appeal' is still appealing for a third Labour Government. It will appeal in vain. If anything could drive the disillusioned masses into apathy and/or Fascism it would be a third Labour Government fiasco. We fear that the demand is merely another instance of 'revolutionary conservatism': what Lenin said in 1920 under quite other historical circumstances."

There are so many errors and falsifications in these few lines that we must examine them carefully. Firstly, the comrades of the *Socialist Appeal* have never spoken of a "third Labour Government." Instead, they have explicitly rejected this formula to better show that a Labour Government must not be permitted to be a repetition of the unfortunate experiences of the past, but must be a stage in the development of the English revolution. This cheap falsification shows that Ridley is not conducting an honest discussion.

Ridley then affirms that those appealing for a Labour Government "will appeal in vain." Naturally the course of the English revolution is still unknown. But if one can be sure of anything, it is that this course will pass through a Labourite stage and that this stage will be marked by an enormous enrichment of the political experience of the masses and will prepare them to undertake higher tasks. Without doubt, Labourite leaders are "Bourbons." But can the English workers learn nothing from experience? To answer in the negative is to abandon all perspective of revolution. And isn't the first task of a revolutionary party to facilitate the experience of the masses in order then to lead them farther? The present internal situation of the Labour Party only confirms the correctness of the policy of our English comrades. At the recent convention of the Labour Party, an attempt to halt the political truce with other parties was defeated by the very close vote of 1,275,000 to 1,209,000. One can easily imagine what pressure there was from the leadership in favor of maintaining the truce, and one can affirm with assurance that the great majority of the rank and file workers are clearly for the end of that truce.

Ridley scoffs at our English comrades for their "revolutionary conservatism." However, his irony is very much out of place. He acknowledges himself that the policy of our comrades was that of Lenin in 1920, but he rejects this policy for we are now, it seems, "under quite other historical circumstances." Lenin's 1920 policy had three fundamental premises: first, the English bourgeoisie finds itself in a difficult situation and is becoming more and more incapable of governing as in the past; second, the majority of the working class is organized in the Labour Party; third, the revolutionary vanguard is still a very weak minority. Naturally, we are no longer in 1920, but *which* of the three premises has changed? Precisely *why* would the Leninist policy not be valid today? *What* are the "quite other historical circumstances"? Ridley doesn't even try to answer these fundamental questions.

For years one of the ILP's most frequent objections to

the Comintern was its "sectarianism." In fact, it complained even more bitterly of the "sectarianism" than of the opportunism. But the ILP's present attitude towards the Labour Party shows that it understood nothing of the "sectarian" errors of the Comintern. Towards the Labour Party the ILP takes an ultimatic attitude which resembles that of the Comintern towards the German Social-Democracy. As everyone now knows, that policy was the principal reason for Hitler's success. Does Ridley hope to win the English workers to the revolution by repeating the ill-famed words of Thaelmann and Remmelle?

Under the grand ultimatic phrases, however, the deep-seated opportunism of these people becomes evident. The clearest example is the electoral policy of the ILP. There is a Liberal-Labour-Tory electoral truce in the by-elections. The ILP has put up some candidates against Tories and made important successes (from 15 to 29 per cent of the votes). But the ILP does not oppose Labour candidates. Why? Since Labour candidates run without Tory or Liberal opposition, no one can argue than an ILP candidate would help reaction. Therefore a Marxist party could, in general, oppose its candidates to the Labourite candidates in these by-elections. Naturally, the rule is not obligatory in all cases and often such a party could answer yes or no to the question, according to local circumstances. But for the ILP it should be logically necessary to run candidates. It proclaims that the Labour Party is a "fast putrefying corpse" and that it is reactionary to call on this party to take power. Hence for the ILP it would be obligatory to have everywhere and always its own candidate against the Labourite candidate. But here the opportunist appears under the sectarian mask. The recent national conference of the ILP discussed the electoral problem. Under the pressure of the leadership "a resolution expressing the view that the time was now opportune for the ILP to make a stand against the Labour Party at by-elections was rejected." Listen to the arguments of the leadership: "Maxton declared the Party should only fight by-elections in which there was a chance of a vote which would impress the public that the ILP was a serious political party." The Labour Party is a "fast putrefying corpse," but the ILP leadership refuses to oppose it in the elections in order not to risk its reputation as a "serious" party. . . . Reality has cruel revenges.

In spite of Ridley's twaddle on the "quite other historical circumstances," the majority of the rank and file of the ILP is in favor of the Leninist policy toward the Labour Party. "Conference accepted a resolution . . . [declaring that] the ILP should call upon the Labour, Trade Union and Communist leaders to break their anti-working-class alliance with the National Government, and to wage a campaign for power on the basis of nationalization and workers' control of production." Naturally, the ILP leadership was opposed to this resolution, *which was adopted in spite of this opposition.* (Unfortunately, the report does not give the number of votes for and against.) But to the lack of comprehension of revolutionary tasks the leaders of the ILP add hypocrisy: the spokesman for the leadership "said the leadership opposed because the resolution was redundant and all its points were already covered in official policy."

This vote against the leadership now explains Ridley's articles against the Trotskyists. . . . In actual fact his articles were directed against the fraction of the ILP which supports the Leninist policy and which obtained a majority vote on this question at the conference. The ILP leadership knew very well of the existence of this opposition to its policy. What

would have been the duty of an honest leadership? To open a discussion on this important question, above all since it was the eve of the national conference. What did the ILP leadership do? It had Ridley attack the opposition by attacking a Trotskyist group outside the party. Instead of a serious discussion, the result was some journalistic notes, superficial and rather venomous, clarifying nothing. We have already seen that the ILP policy is not without resemblance to that of the Comintern some years ago. Does the ILP leadership also wish to imitate the Stalinists in its internal methods?

## The ILP Attitude Towards Stalinism

In England as elsewhere the Stalinists are jingoes. In the by-elections they mobilized all their forces to support the Tory candidates against the ILP. At Cardiff, in the by-elections in which the ILP put up Brockway against a Tory, the slogan of the Stalinists was: "A vote for Brockway is a vote for Hitler!" On many occasions the distributors of the *New Leaders* have been attacked by Stalinist hoodlums. Yet the ILP still lacks a clear position on Stalinism. The national conference rejected, at the request of the leadership, a resolution which gave a precise analysis of Stalinism and which concluded: "The Soviet regime and workers' democracy can only be restored by the overthrow of the bureaucratic clique in the Kremlin." What then does the leadership of the ILP offer the Soviet workers? Nothing.

Instead the ILP leaders still find the occasion to praise Stalin. In his February 23rd Order of the Day, Stalin declared: "It would be ridiculous to identify Hitler's clique with the German people and the German state. The experience of history shows that Hitlers come and go whereas the German people and the German state remain." The declaration does not contain a drop of internationalism. Translated into clear terms it simply signifies that Hitler can be eliminated without social upheaval. The "German state," that is the capitalist state, will still exist. The English and American imperialists, as well as the German bourgeoisie, are not to fear proletarian revolution; Stalin will look after that, if need be. That is the meaning of Stalin's declaration. Nevertheless, James Maxton availed himself of that despicable declaration to exclaim to Parliament some days later: "The speech made by Premier Stalin is an infinitely more statesman-like utterance than anything that has come from the Government of this country." That reveals the ILP's profound opportunism not only towards Stalin, but also towards the British government. What criterion has Maxton for judging "statesmanship"? Is he reproaching Churchill for inadequately defending English imperialism, or for inadequately preparing the proletarian revolution? How can a revolutionist reproach Churchill for his lack of "statesmanship"? A criticism of this type implies common interest, the defense of the Empire. As for Stalin, he must be delighted with Maxton's compliment: he knows now that he speaks better than Vansittart!

On March 21 the *New Leader* informs its readers that a plaque on the house in Holford Square where Lenin lived forty years ago "was unveiled by Mrs. Maisky." The editors added no commentary. On the 25th of April the paper described a new ceremony:

"A memorial bust of Lenin in Holford Square was unveiled by the Soviet Ambassador Mr. Maisky. . . . The bust is a cast of the official bust at the Soviet Embassy. Natural light is directed on it, with a crimson background which casts a permanent red glow. A few broken links of chain are set into the base of the memorial to represent 'the workers have nothing

to lose but their chains'. . . . John McNair, General Secretary, represented the ILP at the ceremony."

The Stalino-chauvinists, personified by the ex-Menshevik Maisky, try to conceal their betrayal behind a bust of Lenin. The *New Leader* hasn't a word of criticism on this disgusting ceremony; instead the ILP is represented at this obscene act by its general secretary.

At the ILP national conference an amendment was presented asking for "the advocacy of the production and transport of war materials to the Soviet Union under workers' control." The idea of tying the defense of the Soviet Union to the class struggle of the English workers is excellent. The slogan has an offensive character, as much against the English bourgeoisie as against its agents, the Labourite and Stalinist leaders. But the leadership of the ILP hastened to oppose this proposition. The arguments of its spokesmen were, taken as a whole, that "the proposals are impracticable." Thus, the ILP leaders reveal once more their total incomprehension of the dynamics of revolutionary action. How render "practicable" tomorrow that which is "impracticable" today? They have no idea. They find it very "practicable" to praise the "statesmanship" of Stalin, to insult Lenin by attending fraudulent ceremonies; but to call on the English workers to demand an accounting from the capitalists on the aid to the Soviet Union, that is "impracticable"! How can a worker take seriously the internationalist phrases of the ILP leaders when they at the same time hold such a capitulatory attitude towards Stalino-chauvinism?

## The Task of the Vanguard

The ILP's present position remains entirely in line with its former policy. And this policy, for years and years, has been the policy of *equivocation*. The ILP remains, in the full sense of the word, a *centrist* party. To give precise answers to the problems of the revolution is beyond the powers of the party leadership. Incapable of dispelling the confusion, the leadership tries to cover it by radical *phrases*—which lead it to new errors, for example its attitude towards the Labour Party. Trotsky's remark that a sectarian is only an opportunist frightened by his own opportunism has never been more true than for the ILP.

Doesn't the party's campaign for "a Socialist Britain now" represent a step to the left? Let us examine this question a little. The ILP is the only traditional party in England which recognizes the imperialist character of the war and proclaims the necessity of socialism. Of course in the mouths of the ILP leaders that recognition retains an abstract character. But against the background of complete betrayal by the Labourite and Stalinist leaders, the party acquires a revolutionary glitter. The ILP leaders remain where they were before, but the war has, for the present, lengthened the distance which separates them from the social-patriots.

This fact, although not sufficient to give a revolutionary temper to the ILP leaders, has provoked important changes inside the party. Even for an observer who writes at a distance, it is clear that the party has recruited new elements which take seriously the revolutionary talk of the leadership. The last national conference clearly showed this. The preceding conference, a little more than a year ago, had been a debate between the present leadership and the social-patriotic wing (C. A. Smith). The April 1942 conference revealed a new situation. The leadership proposed a confused revolutionary program and the whole conference consisted of the

efforts of the members to elucidate and to correct the policy of the leaders. In all the debates a notable minority (29 per cent against 71) held a much more revolutionary position than the leadership. On several extremely important questions (workers' councils, the attitude towards the Labour Party) this minority was able to rally a *majority* of the members *against* the leadership. The picture is clear: the rank and file members are trying to "lead" the leaders. The conference revealed two important facts: the party is moving to the left, but in this movement the base is inevitably coming into collision with the inertia of the leadership.

The left wing of the party, we are sure, will follow up the work of clarification undertaken at the national conference. To dispel the confusion, to denounce the inconsistencies, to patiently explain the Leninist policy—such are the tasks of the hour. But all these tasks merge into a single one: to expose to all the incapacity of the leadership. The present leaders are not political novices. For many years they have

shown their inability to assimilate the Leninist policy. To expect them to change is to hope for a miracle. The members of the ILP must always remember the tragic example of the POUM in Spain. That was, like the ILP, a centrist party but incontestably very much more to the left. As a proletarian leader, Nin was a hundred times superior to Maxton. But when the difficult hours of the revolution came, the POUM knew only how to float on the surface of events, incapable of directing them. For this task it is necessary to have a party which has broken all ties with the dominant class and its appendages, a party which knows how to inculcate the oppressed with a fierce hatred of bourgeois society, at the same time a party which does not become befuddled by phrases but which is imbued with a profound revolutionary realism. It is such a party that the English workers must have for the severe ordeals which are coming.

*New York, May 31, 1942.*

# Stalin Blames the German Proletariat

By FELIX MORROW

What is Stalin's attitude toward a second Versailles Treaty? That is, toward a "peace" which will require a Hitlerless Germany to "confess" war guilt, pay reparations over a period of decades to the Allies, submit its finances to control by Anglo-American committees, pay the costs of occupying armies and, in short, begin a "new" life under the control of Germany's imperialist rivals?

In his Order of the Day to the Red Army on its 24th anniversary (February 23), Stalin denied that the Red Army's aim "is to exterminate the German people and destroy the German State." For, he said, "it would be ridiculous to identify Hitler's clique with the German people and the German State. History shows that Hitlers come and go, but the German people and the German State remain." But this declaration by Stalin does not answer the question: what is his attitude toward a second Versailles? The first Versailles Treaty did not avowedly aim to "exterminate the German people and destroy the German State." It "merely" fettered them, strangling Germany's productivity and starving the German people, prevented the economic unification of Europe and paved the way for fascist exploitation of the national hatreds engendered by the oppression of Germany embodied in the Versailles Treaty and the League of Nations.

Stalin has already publicly endorsed the idea of a League of Nations with more teeth as a "solution" to the post-war situation. This concept was embodied in the third point of the Polish-Russian "declaration of friendship and mutual aid," signed December 4, 1941, which stated:

"Once the war has been brought to a victorious conclusion and the Hitler criminals duly punished, the task of the Allied Governments will be to establish a *just peace*. This can only be achieved by new organization of international relations based on the association of democratic States in union. Such an organization to be a decisive factor must have respect for international law and be supported by the armed forces of all the Allied Governments. Only under such conditions can Europe be reestablished and the defeat of the German barbarians achieved; only thus can it be guaranteed that the catastrophe caused by the Hitlerites shall never repeat itself." (N.Y. Times, Dec. 6, 1941. Our emphasis.)

A "just peace" maintained "by the armed forces of all the Allied Governments"—what is this but a second Versailles and a revamped League of Nations? World imperialism displays little ingenuity in its catastrophic decline and simply repeats in this war its formulas of the last war. With this difference, that this time they are underwritten by the Soviet government. This alone betrays the unbridgeable gulf between the government of Stalin and the government of Lenin and Trotsky.

Let Stalin produce a statement by Lenin that a "just peace" could be created by Allied bayonets! We need cite but one of Lenin's many references to Versailles, from his 1920 introduction to *Imperialism*:

"The Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty dictated by monarchist Germany, and later on, the much more brutal and despicable Versailles Treaty dictated by the 'democratic' republics of America and France and also by 'free' England, have rendered very good service to humanity by exposing both the hired coolies of the pen of imperialism and the petty-bourgeois reactionaries, although they call themselves pacifists and socialists, who sang praises to 'Wilsonism,' and who insisted that peace and reform were possible under imperialism." (*Imperialism*, by V. I. Lenin, International Publishers, 1939.)

The logical cornerstone of a second Versailles Treaty, as of the first, must necessarily be a "war guilt" clause, justifying the crushing of Germany in peacetime by its imperialist rivals. The first Versailles Treaty was not signed by the Kaiser but by the Weimar Republic, product of the 1918 revolution. To compel the Weimar Republic to "confess" German war guilt and pay reparations meant that not only the Kaiser who fled, but also the German people who remained, were guilty and must atone for the war. Similarly a second Versailles must be justified by blaming not only the Nazis but also the German masses who will bear the burden of the peace treaty.

Lenin's scorn for the Versailles Treaty was exceeded only by his hatred of those who blamed the masses for the crimes of the imperialist ruling class and the chauvinist labor leaders. For Lenin it was axiomatic that the structure of capitalist

society made it impossible for the great masses to determine their own will and destiny directly. Capitalist control of economic and political power, the schools, newspapers, radio, etc., as well as the lack of homogeneity in the composition of the masses, means that even capitalist "democracy" is a form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Nor can that dictatorship be overthrown directly by the masses. The heterogeneity of the masses makes it impossible for them to struggle except through the leadership of workers' parties. The class and the party are by no means identical. Furthermore, the leadership and the masses of the party are not the same thing. Class, party and leadership—these three precise concepts are the foundation stones of Leninist politics. Under no conditions did Lenin ever blame the masses—always he blamed specific parties and above all the leadership of those parties, for the failure to overthrow capitalism.

In his famous polemic against Kautsky, Lenin deals with the question of responsibility for "socialist" support of the first imperialist war and of Germany's crushing of the revolution in Finland, the Ukraine, Latvia and Esthonia. Writing under military censorship, which protected the pro-war German Social-Democracy from left-wing criticism, Liebknecht had used the formulation that "the proletarians of Europe" were guilty of treachery to the Russian and international revolution. Kautsky had denied Liebknecht's accusation. Lenin answered:

"When the proletarians of Europe are accused of treachery, Kautsky writes, it is an accusation against unknown persons.

"You are mistaken, Mr. Kautsky! Look in the mirror and you will see these 'unknown persons' against whom the accusation is levelled. . . . The accusation expresses a clear appreciation of the fact that the German proletariat betrayed the Russian and international revolution, when it strangled Finland, the Ukraine, Latvia, and Esthonia. This accusation is directed primarily and above all, not against the masses, who are always downtrodden, but against those *leaders* who, like the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, *failed* in their duty to carry on revolutionary agitation, revolutionary propaganda and revolutionary work among the masses to combat their inertness, who in fact worked *against* the revolutionary instincts and aspirations which are always aglow in the depths of the oppressed classes. . . . In all his writings during the war Kautsky tried to *extinguish* the revolutionary spirit, instead of *fostering and fanning* it.

". . . Kautsky does not understand that owing to the censorship prevailing in the German Empire this 'accusation' was perhaps the only form in which the German socialists who have not betrayed socialism, Liebknecht and his friends, could express *their appeal to the German workers* to throw off the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, to push aside such "leaders," to emancipate themselves from their stultifying and lying propaganda, to rise in revolt *in spite of them, without them and over their heads. It was the call for revolution!*" (*The Proletarian Revolution and Renegade Kautsky*, by V. I. Lenin, International Publishers, 1934. Emphasis in the original.)

Revolution over the heads of the Kautskys—but necessarily under the *leadership* of a party and its leading cadres. Neither revolution nor any lasting effort was possible for the masses except under the leadership of a revolutionary party, Lenin explained over and over again. Hence to blame the masses is either stupidity or the classical trick of scoundrels seeking to unload their responsibility upon the masses.

This idea was written into the fundamental documents of the Communist International in the time of Lenin and Trotsky. In the thesis, "The Role of the Communist Party in the Proletarian Revolution," the Second Congress declared:

"A sharp distinction must be made between the conception of 'party' and 'class'. . . . The confounding of these two concep-

tions—of party and of class—can only lead to the greatest errors and confusion. Thus, for instance, it is clear that notwithstanding the disposition or prejudices of certain parts of the working masses during the imperialist war, the workers' parties ought to have counteracted these prejudices, defending the historical interests of the proletariat, which demanded of the proletarian parties a declaration of war against war.

"Thus in the beginning of the imperialist war of 1914, the social-traitor parties of all countries, in upholding the capitalists of their 'own' countries, unanimously declared that such was the will of the people. They forgot at the same time that even if this were so, the duty of the workers' party would have been to combat such an attitude of the majority of the workers, and to defend the interests of the workers at whatever cost. At the very beginning of the twentieth century the Russian Mensheviks of the time denied the possibility of an open political struggle against Czarism, on the ground that the working class in general was not yet ripe for the understanding of the political struggle. So also the right wing of the Independent Socialist Party of Germany, in all its compromising, has referred to the 'will of the masses,' failing to understand that *the party exists precisely for the purpose of marching ahead of the masses and pointing the way.*" (Theses and Statutes of the Communist International, adopted by the Second Congress, reprinted by the United Communist Party of America, 1920.)

Such, in brief, is the Leninist concept of the relation between imperialist rulers, the working class and its parties and leaders. On this basis it is impossible to blame the masses for the crimes of the imperialists and their labor lieutenants. From the point of view of Bolshevism it would be impossible to justify a second Versailles—quite apart from the fact that Bolshevism considers all the imperialists on both sides equally guilty of instigating both world wars.

## The Stalinist Rejection of Lenin's Concept

This Bolshevik concept of the masses is now flagrantly and openly rejected by the Stalinists. They are now blaming, not the leaders and parties of the German proletariat—which means the Stalinist leaders first of all—but the masses. A veritable compendium of such Stalinist libels against the German proletariat has recently been printed by the Communist Party publishing house in this country, Workers Library Publishers. It is the March 1942 issue of *World Survey*, the Stalinist monthly which has replaced the *Communist International* (nothing is now published in the name of the Comintern, since June 22, 1941).

Let us examine this Stalinist compendium, article by article. First comes Stalin's Order of the Day of February 23 to the Red Army, to which we have already referred. Next comes an article by E. Gerey, "For the Complete Defeat of Hitler Germany," which climaxes with this gem:

"But what are the soldiers of the Nazi robber army fighting for? What makes them fight and die, save lust for personal enrichment, save the sadist instinct of a murderer. . . ?" (p. 16)

Such is the Stalinist description of the German proletarians conscripted by the fascist dictatorship!

Next is an article by M. Kalinin, President of the Soviet Union, built around a series of letters allegedly found on German casualties and prisoners. The letters, expressing desire for loot from Russia, are adduced by Kalinin to show "to what extent" and "how deeply" the fascist plans "are rooted among the German soldiers" (p. 28).

The next article is "The German Nation at the Crossroads of History," by Peter Wieden. It blames Hitler fascism upon the German nation and its past history, quite in the

spirit of Sir Robert Vansittart, Churchill's chief exponent of Germany's inveterate character. We quote:

"Never would fascism have attained such power over Germany were it not in a position to gain a foothold and maintain itself by a long historical chain of victories scored by the forces of reaction over the German people. Hitlerism is, of course, the direct and most extreme expression of reactionary German imperialism. But the specific features of this German imperialism, its inordinate brutality, aggressiveness and degeneration, are to a certain extent explained by the peculiar historical development of the German nation. . . . Every time the German people were confronted with vital issues of nationhood they fell under the influence of reaction, after a transitory revolutionary upsurge. Hence they traversed a wrong path, the path of 'national misfortune' leading to catastrophe. People who today ask how it was possible for a nation that gave the world Goethe and Heine, Marx and Engels, to sink so low in Hitler barbarism must take note of these fatal winding paths of German history" (p. 38).

"The British and French spirit was a broad social spirit; the German spirit contemplated the solitude of the universe and was saturated with the provincial narrowmindedness that had accursed the lot even of Germany's greatest poets and thinkers. Only two great men of the German people overcame this discrepancy . . . Marx and Engels. . . . Nor is it accidental that these outstanding champions of German salvation and its future had to live in exile and their voice of enlightenment and warning could reach Germany only from afar" (p. 41).

"National traditions of the German people, not based on any revolutionary experience, were historically interwoven with reaction, militarism and predatory wars. . . . The German working class [after 1871] grew at a rapid pace, winning its place in the social life. Marx and Engels armed it with the epoch-making ideal of scientific socialism. But at the same time the German working class was influenced by the reactionary traditions of the German nation. Lassalle—that shadow of Bismarck in the German labor movement—was but the first forerunner of the notorious 'national socialism,' and his ideological influence was never completely overcome by Marxism. Even such a profound Marxian scholar as Franz Mehring did not appreciate the great significance of the struggle which Marx and Engels waged against Lassalle. Mehring even tried to 'restore the honor' of Lassalle, considering it possible to form some 'synthesis' of Marx and Lassalle.

"Reformism within the German labor movement deliberately clung to Lassalle and made of this Prussian nationalist its idol. . . .

"Democratic ideas in Germany were just as frail as plants grown in a cellar without light or sun" (p. 43).

In every line this is a deliberate falsification of the history of the German proletariat.

It is a deliberate lie that Lassalle was the forerunner of the Nazis; Marx was merciless with Lassalle's errors, but he also wrote when Lassalle died: "What rejoicing will reign among the factory owners and the Progressive swine—Lassalle was after all the only chap they were afraid of in Germany itself." "Lassalle's misfortune has been damnably in my head these days. After all he was still one of the old guard and the enemy of our enemies." Mehring was absolutely correct in saying that Lassalle's imperishable achievement was the founding of the first German working-class party. But the question of Lassalle is a very minor one. Lassalle died in 1864 and then came the great development of the German proletarian movement. How can one mention Lassalle and say not a word about Wilhelm Liebknecht, August Bebel, and the great flowering of the German socialist and trade union movement between 1870 and 1910, forty years' development which inspired the proletariat of the whole world and was its

direct teacher! Yet this Stalinist falsifier does just that. The gigantic progressive work of the German Social-Democracy during a half century, on the shoulders of which Lenin was able to climb—without which, indeed, the Russian revolution would have been inconceivable—all this is wiped out for Stalin's reactionary purposes.

Why did the German Social-Democracy degenerate into reformism and chauvinism? This Stalinist falsifier makes it appear as a "German" phenomenon. But the same thing happened in England, France, the United States, *Russia* where the founder of Russian Marxism, Plekhanov, became a social-chauvinist—it was a world phenomenon caused, as Lenin so clearly explained, by the 1870-1914 development of imperialism and of a labor aristocracy linked by its interests to imperialism.

Stalinism, paying lip-service to Leninism, must concede that World War I, as Lenin said, was an imperialist war for which both sides were equally guilty. Yet Wieden writes in his article:

"From the very start Germany was a very noisy and aggressive imperialism, always brandishing weapons and always causing a feeling of alarm and war fever in Europe. . . . German imperialism was forging ahead toward war and a new division of the world" (p. 4).

To write this, without saying a word about the equal guilt of the other imperialist powers, is tantamount to underwriting the war guilt clause of the Versailles Treaty.

With this preliminary sketch of German "history," Wieden then goes on to falsify the post-war history of the German proletariat, placing on its shoulders the blame for the failure to carry through the proletarian revolution.

## Stalinist Lies About 1918-1933

Of the abortive revolution of 1918, he writes:

"For Germany the war ended with a military and political collapse. It was the collapse of the reactionary forces that had driven Germany into the war. It opened up a great opportunity for the German people to mend their crippled history by really crushing reaction and indissolubly linking up the national problem with democracy and socialism. But this chance too was passed by. Once more the destinies of the German people were in the clutches of reaction. . . . The opportunistic leadership of German Social-Democracy shouldered tremendous historical responsibilities when they sided with the forces of counter-revolution" (p. 45).

That the German workers did rise, arms in hand, crushing the Junkers and capitalists, creating Soviets, only to be cheated of the fruits of revolution by the reformists—of this there is not a word by the Stalinist "historian." Why didn't the Spartacists, forerunners of the Communist Party, lead the German workers to victory? This, the key question of the 1918-19 events, is not even hinted at by the Stalinist falsifier; he does not even mention the Spartacists! The tragic errors of the Spartacists, the immaturity of their strategy and tactics, hence the profound lesson that the cadres of the revolutionary party are not built overnight in the midst of revolution—of all this not a word in the Stalinist "history." Instead, we are told "the chance was passed by"—by the masses presumably—thus continuing the false picture of the "peculiar" characteristics of the German proletariat.

Despite the counter-revolutionary work of the Social-Democracy; despite the blood-bath by Noske—15,000 proletarians were murdered during the first nine months of 1919 in incessant civil war encounters—the young Communist Party of Germany quickly grew into a mass party. Despite its

defeat in the March Action of 1921—a premature insurrection—it grew to over 500,000 members in 1922. In 1923 the situation was again revolutionary. Disinterested observers concede that in the summer of 1923 the Communist Party was unquestionably the leader of the great majority of the German proletariat. Inflation and starvation were driving the petty-bourgeois masses to accept the revolutionary way out. What happened then? Here is Wieden's three-sentence reference to this great turning-point of modern history:

"In 1923, things came to a decisive clash between the forces of reaction and those of revolution, decisive for a long period. The defeat of the revolutionary forces was a national tragedy for Germany. The way was now finally cleared for German imperialism to solve German problems after its own fashion—by a sanguinary war for world domination" (p. 45).

Every word here is false. There was no "decisive clash." On the contrary, the Brandler leadership of the Communist Party did not summon the masses to revolution, but supinely let the opportunity pass by. Behind Brandler stood the *troika* in Moscow: Zinoviev, Bukharin and Stalin, the latter advising (in reality ordering) Zinoviev and Bukharin to "curb" the German party. The *troika* and the Brandler leadership bear the responsibility for failing to act in 1923, not, as Wieden falsely claims, that failure was the result of a "decisive clash."

Equally false is his claim that by the failure of 1923 "the way was now finally cleared for German imperialism" for war. Wieden says this solely to hide Stalin's responsibility for the events of the next ten years, above all the fact that the great German Communist Party, numbering 600,000 members and polling six million votes in 1932, went down in March 1933 without a struggle, not even such a rearguard struggle as the Social-Democrats of Austria conducted in 1934 against Dolfuss' artillery.

To these falsehoods, Wieden adds this version of the events of 1929-33:

"The world economic crisis which broke out in 1929 brought social tension to an extreme limit. . . . The horrible impoverishment of the masses as well as the development of the class consciousness of the German workers created favorable prerequisites for a new revolutionary upsurge. The German imperialists felt the ground burning under their feet. . . . Their plans were aided by several factors. One of these was the policy of Social-Democracy, which was repelling the petty-bourgeois sections of the people. Split and undermined by internal strife, the working class possessed only a limited power of attraction for other sections of the toiling people. Millions of peasants, civil servants, office employees and intellectuals looked into empty space.

"Catastrophic unemployment was demoralizing a part of the working class. Incited, desperate and politically illiterate masses came into motion and were prepared to follow any demagogue, even if he promised them the moon. In those critical and decisive hours for the nation all the reactionary chauvinist traditions were resurrected and plunged on Germany like a filthy and turbid rain" (p. 45).

But where was the great German Communist Party in all this? The Russian proletariat in the summer of 1917 was also "split" and the catastrophes of the war were driving the far more "desperate and politically illiterate masses" of that predominantly petty-bourgeois country "to follow any demagogue." But it was the Bolshevik party that conquered in Russia, while the fascists won in Germany. Lenin would first of all ask the key question: Why didn't the German Communist Party succeed in carrying the masses to victory, what was wrong with its policies and slogans? But Stalinism, instead, blames its own crimes upon the masses. Not a word about the capitulation without a fight by the Stalinist leaders

in Germany; instead "the reactionary chauvinist traditions were resurrected"—having been previously forged as "history" precisely in order to cover up Stalin's crime in aiding Hitler to power.

The next article in this Stalinist compendium, "From the Reichstag Fire to World Conflagration," by G. Friedrich, for a moment appears to grapple with a real question:

"In November, 1932, in the elections, Hitler's party lost no less than 2,000,000 votes, while the Communist Party of Germany secured a brilliant victory, receiving 6,000,000 votes.

"How, then, could Hitler 'seize power' under such conditions?" (p. 47)

This very pertinent question is, however, immediately reduced to the obvious fact that Hitler did not seize power in a revolutionary sense but "was smuggled to the Premiership by backstairs intrigues of his capitalist promoters." True enough, but that does not answer the essence of the question: How could Hitler outlaw the Communist Party and crush the trade unions only a few weeks after six million workers had voted Communist and seven million others had voted Socialist? The essence of the question neither Friedrich nor any other Stalinist dare answer, for to answer would be to condemn Stalin and his lackeys in the German leadership who, having let Hitler come to power, had their passports and airplane tickets and fled to Moscow, leaving the masses leaderless. Instead of answering the question, Friedrich writes:

"The Reichstag Fire [of March 1933] ushered in an epoch of German history, an epoch great only for its disgraceful, hideous and vile crimes which have brought shame on the whole German people" (p. 49).

To say it brought shame on the whole German people—that means to blame the masses for the crimes of the Nazis!

Friedrich concludes his account of the Reichstag fire and trial with the following:

"At that time the masses of people failed to continue the struggle and to lead it to its logical end. The quicker, the more thoroughly must we now make up for lost time" (p. 55).

"The masses" failed, and "we"—presumably the Communist Party of Germany—must now make up for "lost time"—time lost by the masses. But where were "we," the Communist Party of Germany, the Communist International and the Soviet Union and its Red Army in 1933? Even before Hitlerism came to power, Trotsky urged that if the Nazis should come to power the Red Army must mobilize to prevent the onslaught against the Soviet Union which was Hitler's fundamental aim. "We" were Stalinists, who fled the battle in Germany and conducted Stalin's cowardly and provincial foreign policy in the Kremlin, and now end up by blaming the downtrodden masses of Germany for the catastrophe.

## Blaming the Masses for the War!

All the preceding articles are, however, mere curtain raisers for the article of K. Erwin, "From the Intoxication of Victory to Bitter Sobering," which is ostensibly written by a Communist Party leader from inside Germany in December 1941.

Erwin's article is one long condemnation of the German masses for failing to prevent the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union, and for continuing to obey the Nazi rulers. Here is Erwin's account of events in Berlin on June 22, 1941, the day Hitler attacked the USSR:

"By seven in the morning our comrades were on the way to factories with instructions to organize protest meetings by direct action. I made my way to one of our secret meetings to confer with our people.

". . . There were, of course, no signs of enthusiasm by the

populace, and alarm and defection could be felt everywhere. . . .

"Obviously Hitler had a reason to fear his people and was ready to handle them roughly. We Communists, too, expected an unquiet day in Berlin. We were indeed convinced that after the conclusion of the German-Soviet Pact, Hitler would not be able to swing our people over to war against the USSR. We trusted the wisdom and class consciousness of the Berlin worker. But subsequent events show that we miscalculated.

"Toward evening it became clear that the Berlin worker would not budge. Attempts by our comrades to hold mass meetings near factories met with no success. All we could manage were small clandestine meetings of our Party organizations and sympathizers in various districts. . . .

"At that time we saw with distress and affliction that the war, like a wave, was sweeping over the heads of our party organizations, which were just coming back to life. . ." (p. 56-57).

And Erwin blames, not the 19-year false course of Stalinism in Germany, but the disoriented and disorganized masses:

"Explanation can be found for the cowardice of those who, while opposed to the criminal anti-Soviet war, nevertheless tried to advance some rotten excuse for their capitulation. Some of them reasoned in a purely philistine manner: 'It's like banging your head against a stone wall. The Nazis are strong, and if you put up a fight you will either be killed or land in prison.' But these people forget that had the Russian workers taken this line they would never have overthrown Czarism and abolished the rule of the landlords and capitalists.

"Among the former Social-Democrats there were no small number who preferred to have others pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them. They took the view that 'it is too early to come out. We must wait until the Russians break Hitler's neck.'

"Anti-Nazi soldiers at the front tried to find some justification by referring to military discipline. 'We are soldiers,' they argued, 'and have no choice but to obey orders' (pp. 55-6. Our emphasis.).

"No little work is required to expose the cowardly attempts of certain anti-fascist elements who gloss over the question of responsibility which our working class and our people bear for the war against the Soviet Union. 'Only the Nazis are responsible for the anti-Soviet war and for the German Army's invasion of the USSR,' these people maintain. That the Nazi villains are responsible is, of course, beyond a doubt. But we say that those who actually encouraged such crimes by their passivity and silence must bear their share of responsibility. Whoever remains silent exposes himself as a participant in the Nazi crimes" (p. 67. Our emphasis.).

It is hard to find words adequate to characterize these vile libels on the German proletariat. In 1918 the German proletariat made an armed revolution and was cheated of its fruits by the Social-Democratic leadership\*; in 1923 it was cheated

\*The Social-Democratic leadership, in turn, pointed to the threats against a German Soviet government which were being made by the "democracies." For example, on March 17, 1920, Lord Kilmar-nock presented to the German government a note from the Allied Supreme War Council, threatening to stop all deliveries of food and raw materials if a Soviet government were to take power—the same measures by which the Allies crushed the Hungarian Soviet Republic. The Allies also encouraged the formation of the counter-revolutionary *Freikorps* armed bands, forerunners of (and later incorporated into) the Nazis, to prevent the Bolshevization of Germany. Considering the Social-Democracy as playing the role of Kerensky, the "democracies" from the first favored the German reactionary parties against the workers' parties. But this Stalinist compendium breathes not a word about the counter-revolutionary role of Stalin's present "allies."

by the Communist Party and Stalin; at every point from 1918-33 the proletariat evinced its readiness to die in the struggle for a better world and instead was delivered into Hitler's hands by Stalinism and Social-Democracy. Exhausted by fifteen years of heroic but unavailing struggle, the German proletariat could still cast thirteen million votes for Socialism and Communism on the eve of Hitler's victory. There is no doubt that after this exhaustion the German masses, when Hitler's uninterrupted series of diplomatic victories was followed by even more gigantic military victories, succumbed to chauvinist intoxication. Having been betrayed by the working-class parties, they were morally overwhelmed by Hitler's successes. But chauvinist intoxication is not peculiar to the German proletariat. Even the Russian masses of Czarist Russia succumbed to it in 1914, and their heads did not clear until defeats and hunger came—and the Bolsheviks explained what was happening, cautiously gathered together class-conscious workers by ones and twos, and waited for the inevitable opportunity.

Instead of explaining to the German workers, along comes a Stalinist bureaucrat—more accurately, he sends the devoted rank and filers to the factories to sacrifice themselves in the attempt to hold open meetings "by direct action" while he safely goes to a "secret meeting"—and condemns the German proletariat for failing, at the peak of Hitler's power and victories, to stop the war! The devoted workers, who remain true to socialism and to Leninist methods of work, and who argue that it is impossible to come out openly under those conditions, this vile bureaucrat condemns: "the Berlin worker would not budge." He (probably writing not from Berlin but from Switzerland, from the internal evidence) sneers at anti-Nazi soldiers who explain that at this stage they have no choice but to obey orders. He answers the German proletariat with the ultimatum that they bear the responsibility for the war against the Soviet Union! Hitler could not want anything better than this Stalinist combination: the bureaucratic sacrifice of the party cadres in adventurist attempts to hold public mass meetings under the Nazi dictatorship on the day the Nazi-Soviet war begins, and the threat that those "must bear their share of responsibility" who "encouraged" Hitler by passivity and silence. The adventurism prematurely exposes and destroys the anti-fascists; the threat of post-war punishment keeps the masses in subjection to Hitler.

Lest there still be any misunderstanding about the extent to which the Stalinists blame the great masses of Germany, still another article in the same Stalinist compendium is entitled "The Fascist Murderers and Their Accomplices Will Be Called to Responsibility," and itemizes among the "accomplices" the following:

"The responsibility . . . falls on Hitler. . . .

"But the responsibility is shared also by those soldiers who, fulfilling the criminal orders of their superiors, reduce to ruins the Soviet towns and villages, loot the population and collective farms in order to supply the fascist hordes, and take part in the execution of death sentences against the Soviet citizens.

"These nightmarish crimes disgrace the German nation. No one in Germany can today make the excuse that these atrocities were unknown because the fascist rulers hid the facts from the German people. Thousands of letters written by German soldiers relate how the Hitler warriors 'organize,' that is, steal; how they maltreat civilians. These letters speak of these things as ordinary common occurrences. And what about the thousands of letters received by the German soldiers at the front from relatives and friends, particularly in the first months of the war, with numerous requests to 'organize' and send them various

valuable articles which under no circumstances can be classed as war trophies.

"... And if the German people and primarily the German working class will continue silence, if they fail to raise a powerful voice of protest, they will be inviting responsibility for the crimes committed by the Hitlerites in their name.

"*What moral deterioration of the average German is expressed in these words, 'but these Poles are not Germans'—therefore everything is permissible*" (pp. 80-81. Our emphasis.).

Thus the Stalinists list among Hitler's "accomplices" the soldiers who obey military orders, their families who receive articles from them, and the "average German."

Precisely this fear of the masses that they will be burdened with the responsibility for the war if Germany loses is Hitler's main weapon in maintaining his hold on the army and civilian population, as even these Stalinist bureaucrats inadvertently bring out. In his article assertedly written from Germany, Erwin writes:

"The majority [of the workers] believed that the sole path to peace was through Germany's victory. I particularly stress this point, for it formed one of the greatest difficulties in our work of carrying out the slogan issued by the Central Committee of our party, namely 'Strike at Hitler from the Rear!' (p. 59).

"The German soldier is fighting but without any belief, hope or perspective, like a trapped wolf who has no other choice" (p. 64).

"The average German . . . realizes that he will be called to answer. For the first time there is a feeling of fear for the grim hatred of other peoples, a fear that literally encircles present-day Germany. This fear is utilized by Hitler for his own foul ends. 'We will all be hanged from one rope in case of defeat,' Goebbels tells the German people. The Nazis want to keep the German people and the German army in submission through fear of defeat" (p. 64).

Why does the majority believe that only German victory gives them any hope for peace? Obviously they fear a second Versailles. The soldier "like a trapped wolf who has no other choice" likewise fears a second Versailles. The "fear of defeat" can be only fear of a second Versailles. What, then, do the Stalinists answer to these workers and soldiers, in order to reassure them about the post-war world? Here are two answers, given by Erwin:

"The Nazis want to keep the German people and the German army in submission through fear of defeat. But the greater the

dimensions of Germany's present catastrophe the less do the people fear defeat, for no future can be worse than what they are living through at present" (p. 64).

"Following in the wake of Goebbels, the Nazis are trying to intimidate the workers with a bogey of a new Versailles. To this the workers reply and with very good reason, 'The Soviet Union is not engaged in a war of conquest. It is fighting against Nazi Germany, which attacked it. The Nazis will suffer; all the better for the German people.'"

Note these Stalinist answers well! They tell everything we need to know about Stalinist policy now and Stalinist perspectives for the peace conference. "We fear a second Versailles," say the German workers. The Stalinists answer: (1) It will be no worse than what you already have and (2) anyway, the Soviet war is progressive.

*But not a word pledging that the Kremlin and the Comintern will fight side by side with a workers' Germany against a second Versailles!* Not even a half-promise that there won't be a second Versailles! On the contrary, these Stalinist answers implicitly assume the likelihood of a second Versailles.

Paying lip-service to the doctrines of the founder of the workers' state, Stalinism at each further stage of its degeneration must openly reject still another tenet of Leninism. Now it has reached the point of openly denying Lenin's conception of the relation of class, party and leadership. Paving the way for collaboration in writing a second Versailles Treaty, Stalinism blames the German proletariat for the plight to which it was brought by Stalinism and Social-Democracy.

But Stalin's "war guilt" clause will be no more accepted by the German proletariat, and the vanguard of the world proletariat which completely solidarizes itself with its German brothers, than they accepted the "war guilt" clause of the first Versailles Treaty. Gagged by Hitler and betrayed by Stalin, the German proletariat cannot give its own answer today. But it will answer, of that we are certain. Marx and Engels, Mehring and Clara Zetkin, Wilhelm and Karl Liebknecht, were not accidental products of the German proletariat. The section of the proletariat which for fifty years inspired the world proletariat by its achievements will rise again, and when it will, it will settle accounts not only with the Nazis and their capitalist masters, but also with their Stalinist libelers.

## INTERNATIONAL NOTES

### Switzerland

From Switzerland comes the news that three Swiss members of the Fourth International have been imprisoned recently. Several members of the leadership of the Swiss section of the Fourth International had already been arrested at the outbreak of the war. The Swiss bourgeoisie, which makes huge profits out of the war, never forgets the struggle against its own workers.

### France

News from France received since Laval came to power describes the expansion of police measures. The situation is becoming more and more difficult for the revolutionary organizations. Two members of the Parti Ouvrier Internationaliste (French section of

the Fourth International) have been arrested in Paris recently. The leadership works under increasingly difficult conditions. The food situation has also been extremely aggravated in recent months.

NOTE: Since the above was written, three other members of the French party have been arrested in the Nazi-occupied zone.

### England

The following is an excerpt from a letter from an English Trotskyist, member of the Workers' International League:

You will have heard, no doubt, of the recent strikes among the dockers and miners here. In every case they have been solid despite both their official leadership and the Stalinists who in the past had taken the lead on the job. It is funny to see the actions

of the Stalinists in such situations. They remain quite dead where they don't carry out direct strike-breaking activities. The latter is more frequent than the former.

So far as I can see from the reports, the I.L.P. leadership is completely finished, they are hopeless on the question of the Soviet Union and the attitude towards war. They give Stalin the benefit for the development of the USSR! Their policy is completely opportunist (they are calling for a "Socialist Britain now," but still retain C. A. Smith who supports the war, and other elements who are working full time as Chauvinists).

The field is very favorable to us for development. Sales of material are very good. For example on the Merseyside with only eight comrades we sell 1,000 copies of "Socialist Appeal" and with more time we could easily increase this to 2,000 or more. But we must work like hell to educate our comrades and friends, only in this way will we win the battle. D.

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